School of Environmental Sciences
Department of Geography and Planning

Collaborative approach for developing a more effective regional planning framework in Egypt: ecotourism development as case study

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Emad Hemdan Mahmoud Kenawy

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Abstract

In Egypt, as in most developing countries, highly technical plans are drawn up, but nobody puts them into practice. They always end up gathering dust on the shelves of national agencies or local government without being utilised to make improvements to local economic or environmental well-being. The main flaws in the current plan-making process are centred on central government's monopoly in decision-making; fragmentation between government agencies leading to multiple and often conflicting spatial plans for the same location; and an absence of effective negotiation mechanisms between various stakeholders. These problems can be clearly demonstrated with reference to ecotourism planning. Such plans are being developed in highly sensitive regions, both environmentally and culturally, and there is a wide spectrum of stakeholders who are affected and influenced by any ecotourism development. Ecotourism development planning is a complex issue to the extent that it is beyond the capacity of any one stakeholder acting alone to resolve. These arguments are circular and very unlikely to be solved without effective collaboration between relevant stakeholders; such collaboration may avoid the costs of resolving long-running conflicts and improve the implementation rate of plans. The most appropriate starting point for this is focusing on the planning process by ensuring that development plans properly reflect stakeholder interests and deal with their conflicts through face-to-face dialogue. Therefore, the main aim of this thesis was ***"To design a practical framework for operationalising a collaborative planning approach in regional planning using ecotourism development as a case study"***.

A case study approach was adopted to examine whether the formulated conceptual framework could be applied in practice. Evidence from the case studies was drawn from a critical documentary review of three Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives, combined with observation and semi-structured interviews with 67 ecotourism experts and stakeholders. Gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement in the current planning processes as well as the barriers which have hindered the efficiency of stakeholder participation were identified from this evaluation.

The final part of this thesis attempted to provide a number of recommendations to fill in these gaps and mitigate the barriers. The most important contribution was that of developing a practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning that could be used to enhance stakeholder engagement during the planning process, for regional development in general and ecotourism in particular. This framework attempted to provide a methodology and guidelines on the operationalisation of stakeholder engagement during the planning process, designed to increase the likely success of plan implementation.

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I dedicate this study

To my beloved Mum,
My beloved mother-in-law
And my beloved Wife

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List of acronyms and abbreviations

CEP	Collaborative Ecotourism Planning
CISS	Cooperation Internationale Süd-Süd
CoC	Chamber of Commerce
CPA	Collaborative Planning Approach
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DTP	Department of Tourism Promotion
EAC	Ecotourism Advisory Committee
EDG	Environmental Design Group Consultancy
EEAA	Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency
EEPP	Egyptian Environment Policy Program
EHA	Egyptian Hotels Association
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMS	Environmental Management System
EMUs	Environmental Management Units
ESAs	Environmentally Sensitive Areas
ESDNVG	Ecotourism for Sustainable Development in the New Valley Governorate
ETA	Egyptian Tourist Authority
ETF	Egyptian Tourist Federation
FEDP	Fayoum Ecotourism Development Plan
FG	Fayoum Governorate
FTA	Fayoum Tourism Authority
FURP	Faculty of Urban and Regional Planning
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographical Information System
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GOPP	General Organization for Physical Planning

GPS	Global Positioning System
HEPCA	Hurghada Environmental Protection and Conservation Association
IBAS	Important Birds Areas
IDSC	Information and Decision Support Centre
ISM	Influence and Stake Matrix
ITDA	Inter-ministerial Tourism Development Agency
IUCN	International Union Conservation of Nature
IYE	International Year of Ecotourism
LIFE	Livelihood and Income From Environment
LSPs	Local Spatial Plans
LTDC	Local Tourism Data Centre
MED WET	Mediterranean Wetland Initiative
MDGS	Millennium Development Goals
MOT	Ministry of Tourism
MLD	Ministry of Local Development
MOA	Ministry of Antiquites
MOE	Ministry of Education
MPIC	Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation
MS	Mediterranean Sea
MSEA	Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs
NCE	Nature Conservation Egypt
NCPSLU	National Centre for Planning State Lands Usage
NGOs	Non -governmental organizations
NSCE	North South Consultant Exchange
NSP	National Spatial Planning
NTDC	National Tourism Development Centre
NVTA	New Valley Tourism Authority
PLCs	Popular Local Councils
PPP	private-public partnership
PLUM	Power, Legitimacy and Urgency Model
RBOs	Regional Branch Offices
RPCs	Regional Planning Centres
RSG	Red Sea Governorate
RSPs	Regional Spatial Plans
RSSTI	Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative
RTDA	Regional Tourism Development Agency
RTDC	Regional Tourism Data Centre
SCPUD	Supreme Council for Planning and Urban Development
SCT	Supreme Council of Tourism

SPA	Shores Protection Authority
SPS	Social Problem Solving
SNA	Stakeholder Network Analysis
SRSR	Southern Red Sea Region
STE	Sustainable Tourism Egypt Conference
SUPSC	Strategic Urban Planning for Small Cities
SWOT	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats analysis
TDA	Tourism Development Authority
TDC	Tourism Data Centre
TIES	The International Ecotourism society
TOR	Terms Of Reference
UN	United Nation
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNTWO	United Nations Tourism World Organisation
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WGNP	Wadi El-Gimal National Park

EC-2: A reference to the interviewee/s: the acronyms refer to the interviewee groups: EC= Experts & Consultants in ecotourism development or participatory planning, PS = An employee in the Public Sector, PrS = Representative of the Private Sector bodies, NG = A member of NGO boards, LC = A member of the key persons of the Local Communities, T= Representative of the ecotourists, FIO = A member of the Funder and International Organisations; and the number refers to the serial number of the interviewee in each group.

Part One: Introduction and conceptual framework

Chapter One: Introduction to the research

Chapter One

Introduction to the research

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a general introduction to the thesis. Firstly, the chapter introduces the rationale of the research problem, and sets out the research aims, objectives and questions. It states the research stages and gives a summary of the research strategy and methodology employed. Finally, the structure of the whole thesis is outlined.

1.1 The rationale of the research

The inadequacies of the traditional planning approach for such complex domains such as regional development, which requires dynamic collaboration and negotiation between the relevant stakeholders, are well known (Getz & Jamal 1994b). Such issues are even more acute in the Middle East and Egypt in particular, where regional plans are frequently and rationally prepared but rarely implemented. This thesis seeks to explore the reasons for such tensions using ecotourism planning as the lens through which such issues can be explored. There are three key perspectives that can explain the rationale for this work.

1.1.1 Why the research focuses on the process of making a development plan

The first main idea behind this focus is that better processes of deliberation and plan making should lead to better outcomes and then greater support for, and commitment to, implementation efforts (Margerum 2011). Morton (2009) emphasised that different traditional planning processes, which rely mainly on independent experts, are inadequate to ensure sustainability. Moreover, failure of plan implementation is a result of the difficulty in understanding competing interests and involvement of diverse stakeholders in the planning process. Likewise, there is a rich body of literature on planning implementation, such as Gray (1989); Innes and Booher (1999); Mazmanian and Sabatier (1989), which has pointed out that the key factors of implementation success (all of them could be addressed during the planning process) include: clear and consistent objectives; causal linkages between objectives and actions; designation of a sympathetic stakeholder with adequate resources to prepare and implement the plans; strong public support; and then a commitment to implementation. Additionally, Albert, Gunton and Day (2003) asserted that successful plan implementations are more likely with stakeholder support and if they comply

with a plan with which the stakeholders were involved in developing. Their research concluded also that active engagement of a wide range of stakeholders in the planning process will increase the likelihood of successful implementation of a plan.

Further to this, the second reason for focusing on the planning process comes from the results of the informal survey[1], which emphasised that there are ten factors impeding the implementation of the plans within the Egyptian context. Most of the interviewees emphasised the importance of enhancing the planning process through the participation and collaboration of the relevant stakeholders as being the key positive contribution that could be made for addressing seven of these factors, as Table (1-1) shows. This collaborative process also could help provide the financial resources for implementation from the stakeholders themselves or enable them to seek other resources to put into practice the plans that meet their interests.

The third reason is the background of the author and his experience in the development and spatial planning process when he graduated from the Faculty of Urban and Regional Planning (FURP), Cairo University, and then was working from 2000 to 2010 as a teaching assistant on several of the planning process courses in the FURP as well as being a team leader involved in the preparation of a significant number of the plans (local and regional levels).

[1] The informal survey was conducted by the author with nine key Egyptian experts and consultants in development planning during June and July 2011. It was conducted by telephone and Skype. The discussion centred around three questions: what are the key factors impeding the implementation of plans in Egypt? Can these factors be ranked in order of importance? And, how can the plans' implementation be improved?

Table (1-1) The key factors impeding the implementation of development plans in Egypt

Key factors impeding the development plans' implementation		The ranking of the factors based on their importance for improving the plans' implementation *
Dominating Top-Down approach in the planning process		First priority
Lack of stakeholder participation and adequate networking during the planning process		
Lack of negotiation and consensus-building between the stakeholders		
A wide vertical and horizontal fragmentation between governmental authorities		
Unclear responsibilities and absence of implementation mechanisms after developing the plans[2]		
Unavailability of the financial resources	The development plans are not related to the state and governorates' budgets	Second priority
	The international funding was for the planning process only so the process stopped once the funding ended	
Lack of adequate regulatory system for forcing the competent authorities to respect the plans**		Third priority
Conflict of interests between the stakeholders		
Lack of capacity of the government staff (local and regional) concerned with the plans' implementation		

Source: The author based on the findings of the informal survey during June and July 2011

* This ranks is based on the views of the key experts

** This problem will be addressed by issuing an appropriate legal framework

Problems that could be addressed by the stakeholders participating & collaborating during the planning process

Problems that could be mitigated by the stakeholders participating & collaborating during the planning process

1.1.2 The need for planning using a collaborative approach

The failure of regional plans has come from the planning process not effectively engaging all relevant stakeholders or dealing with the tension and conflict between them. Without effective negotiations and the building of consensus between stakeholders this failure is not addressed, but, furthermore, many stakeholders may proactively resist the implementation of plans that do not meet their needs (Bonilla 2008). The best plans are built by stakeholder collaboration. Then they (the stakeholders) commit to implement them, even if they are not necessarily of the

[2] Two of the interviewees highlighted that, after the planning process had been finished, the donors and planning teams left the plans without taking any responsibility for implementation as results of the stakeholders' exclusion. If the stakeholders had been involved during the process and the plans had met their interests, they would have pushed the government and private sector to commit to and implement these plans.

highest technical quality (Albert, Gunton & Day 2003). Moreover, stakeholder participation is an essential pre-requisite for a good planning practice because it provides:

- Better understanding of complex issues such as regional development;
- Understanding and appreciation of the conflicts of interests of the stakeholders in the development, evolving to achieve the most appropriate balance between their interests (Gunton, Rutherford & Dickinson 2010); and
- Enhancement of the stakeholders' commitment to implementation because the people care about what they are interested in, and will be committed when they feel their interest can be achieved (Imran, Alam & Beaumont 2011).

Therefore this research seeks to build a framework for collaborative planning (CP) in Egypt:

To try to address the problems of the traditional planning approach

Although the traditional planning approach is not appropriate for such a complex domain as regional development, the Egyptian planning system is still based on a top-down process that suffers from centrality and a central government monopoly of decision-making in most of the steps (Shalaby 2012). The process of producing plans focuses on high technical quality, based on consultants' experiences and successful case studies in other developing countries. But such plans rarely meet relevant stakeholders' interests. Therefore they are not put into practice and end up gathering dust on the shelves (Bonilla 2008). The main flaws in the current plan-making process are centred on the main stakeholder groups not being involved during the process and the majority of the participants in the consultation workshops being governmental employees. The lack of negotiation between the relevant stakeholders with competing interests in the same location has also been an issue. These flaws have led to several problems such as:

- Stakeholder resistance to the plans makes implementation impossible (Bonilla 2003). The governmental bodies often have two options to overcome this resistance: a) implement the easiest elements and ignore the rest of the plan. For example, with the ecotourism development plan for the Whale Valley, which was completed in 2006, all the more significant and controversial

elements were ignored; only the signage was designed and implemented for the protected area (TDA & SHSC 2006); or b) set up training programmes for the staff of the government authorities, like the spatial development plan for the Red Sea Governorate (RSG) in 2008 (GOPP 2008).

- Conflict and overlap between different, often sectionally focused, development plans for the same area. There are multiple and frequent plans for the same place under different names and responsibilities, which has led to incongruous proposals for land use and failure of decisions about appropriate (type and scale) of development, and the subsequent degradation of environmental assets and a loss of potential economic benefits. For example, Fayoum Governorate is a typical development region that has fourteen development plans (as shown in Appendix 3): six plans prepared by the Tourism Development Authority (TDA), three plans prepared by each of General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) and Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) and a plan prepared by each of MPIC and Governorate in association with Cairo University. Unfortunately, the majority of these agencies prepare plans without critically evaluating the previous or synchronous plans in order to build a new one based on their results which would therefore have added value.

To try to address the centralisation and fragmentation in the system of public administration The public administration system in Egypt is described as being highly centralised, based on the national government (Shalaby 2012), with limited responsibility, if any, given to the regional and local governments. Moreover, weak institutions competing for the same resources and overlapping functions inevitably leads to a lack of integration both horizontally and vertically (El-Barmelgy 2002; Loughlin & Nada 2012). This fragmentation results in significant conflicts in different public sector administrative plans for the same location (Nada 2012). Furthermore, there is often inconsistency in the evidence base justifying the action, as they are mainly dependent on their own information and surveys when preparing their plans (Hegazy 2010; SIS 2013a).

Kamarudin (2013) asserted that one way to overcome such problems would be by promoting communication and collaboration within and between institutions, as well as broadening the participation of the stakeholders during the planning process.

To try to address the importance of a collaborative approach in development planning as an alternative Collaborative planning (CP) is a recent approach, which has emerged since the 1990s, and could be one of the best methods to address fragmentation and highly centralised decision-making in developing countries such as Egypt (Monjardin 2004). It can resolve the conflicts between the stakeholders and produce more shared and more equitable solutions. It improves the legitimacy and quality of decision-making as well as building integration among, and between, governmental and non-governmental stakeholders through the processes of inclusiveness, communication, openness, trust and consensus building (Jarvis 2007).

Collaborative planning has been widely recognised as an essential ingredient for development planning for many reasons: a) stakeholder collaboration encourages sustainability of the resources by recognising the variety of stakeholder interests and negotiation takes place between them (Kim 2002); b) CP evolves power from the governmental agencies by providing stakeholders with responsibilities during both planning and implementation stages (Araujo 2000); c) it provides educational opportunities thereby improving stakeholder skills in dealing with planning issues (Lima 2008); d) CP offers continuous and open accountability between the stakeholders (Kim 2002); and e) the participation of multiple stakeholder groups provides broad support for the plans, thus enhancing the likelihood of successful implementation (Albert, Gunton & Day 2003). The importance of the collaborative planning process can therefore be summarised as follows "*No single actor, public or private, has the knowledge and information required to solve complex, dynamic and diversified problems; no single actor has an overview sufficient to make the needed instruments effective; no single actor has sufficient action potential to dominate unilaterally*" (Kooiman, 2000 cited in Jarvis 2007, p.2).

1.1.3 Ecotourism planning as an appropriate case study

According to many including Inskeep (1991), Dowling (1993), El-Barmelgy (2002) and Bonilla (2008), a successful planning process is the main basis for

achieving effective sustainable ecotourism development. This is because such plans are being developed in highly sensitive regions, both environmentally and culturally, and there is a wide spectrum of stakeholders who are affected and influenced by any ecotourism development (Preskill & Jones 2009). The next part will detail the main reasons for using ecotourism planning as a sectorial case study, with particular reference to Egypt.

Recently, tourists have begun seeking a new kind of experience that would allow them to escape the hustle and bustle of everyday life (Holden 2000). A growing proportion of the tourism market is searching for rich landscapes, scenic nature, unique fauna and flora, and a lifetime experience of getting to know indigenous cultures through direct contact with local communities (El-Barmelgy 2002). Such tourist experiences can be found through ecotourism. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as "*environmentally responsible travel to relatively undisturbed areas, to enjoy and appreciate nature and the accompanying cultural features*" (Fennell 2008, p. 22).

At a global scale, ecotourism provides great positive contributions to the environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects of destinations and local communities, offering long-term solutions for protecting and promoting the natural and cultural diversity (Ceballos-Lascurain 1999; TIES 1990). This is consistent with the United Nations (UN) Millennium Development Goals which aim to alleviate poverty and achieve sustainable development (UN 2010; UNTWO 2013).

Although ecotourism captures around only 10% of the global tourism industry (ADB 2010), it is one of the fastest-growing segments (EBSCO 2009). During the 1990s, ecotourism was expanding by 20–34% per annum, while during 2004 it grew globally three times faster than the tourism industry as a whole (SNV 2009). This implies ecotourism is growing at 10-12% annually in the international market (Marker et al. 2008). Furthermore, ecotourism is considered to be more beneficial for the receiving countries and local communities compared with mass tourism, especially as 80% of conventional tourism revenue goes to international companies and tour agencies (Honey 2008), while 95% of the expenditure in ecotourism is put back into the local economy (Marker et al. 2008). Further, the average daily ecotourist

expenditure is over €70 or US $90, which is higher than the conventional tourist expenditure, which is €48 or US $62 (TIES 2006). Moreover, there is global demand for ecotourism; for instance, 53% of American and 95% of Swiss tourists prefer to enhance their tourism experience through learning as much as possible about local communities' culture. Also, 87% of British travellers emphasised that their holiday should appreciate and not damage the environment (Cannas 2012). Consequently, ecotourism is increasing in popularity across the world. It has significant potential for developing countries, where it contributes to the needs of impoverished communities and neglected natural and cultural potentials.

This is true for Egypt: it has a unique geographical position, lying at the north-east corner of Africa. At the same time, it is at the centre of the great Saharo-Sindian desert and is bounded on its north and east by two largely enclosed seas, the Mediterranean and the Red Sea (EEAA & MSEA 2010). Accordingly, Egypt has a multitude of unique ecosystems and natural attractions not found anywhere else in the world. These can be broadly classified into four ecosystem zones: desert, coastal, riverbank and wetland (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004). They include a significant number of Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) suitable for ecotourism development (Figure 1-1). Twenty-nine zones from these ESAs were declared as protected areas by EEAA, with 11 further areas prepared to be declared as such. By 2017, there will be 40 protected areas, representing 20% of Egyptian territory (Ibrahim 2011). Furthermore, there are 21 mangrove sites located in the Red Sea area and 23 bird-watching areas (EEAA 2011). Hence, a significant proportion of Egypt's land mass is environmentally sensitive but also has ecotourism potential if managed properly. Such development – if appropriately managed – could also help with these areas' problems of economic deficit, degradation of environment and decline of the local communities' circumstances. Unfortunately, the current strategies are almost exclusively based on a protectionist perspective, based on the assumption that ecological integrity is only possible in natural regions that are isolated from human activities (Sanchez 2009). However, Egypt could maximise the benefits from these zones through ecotourism development, which in turn could help to counterbalance the dominance of mass tourism within the Egyptian economy.

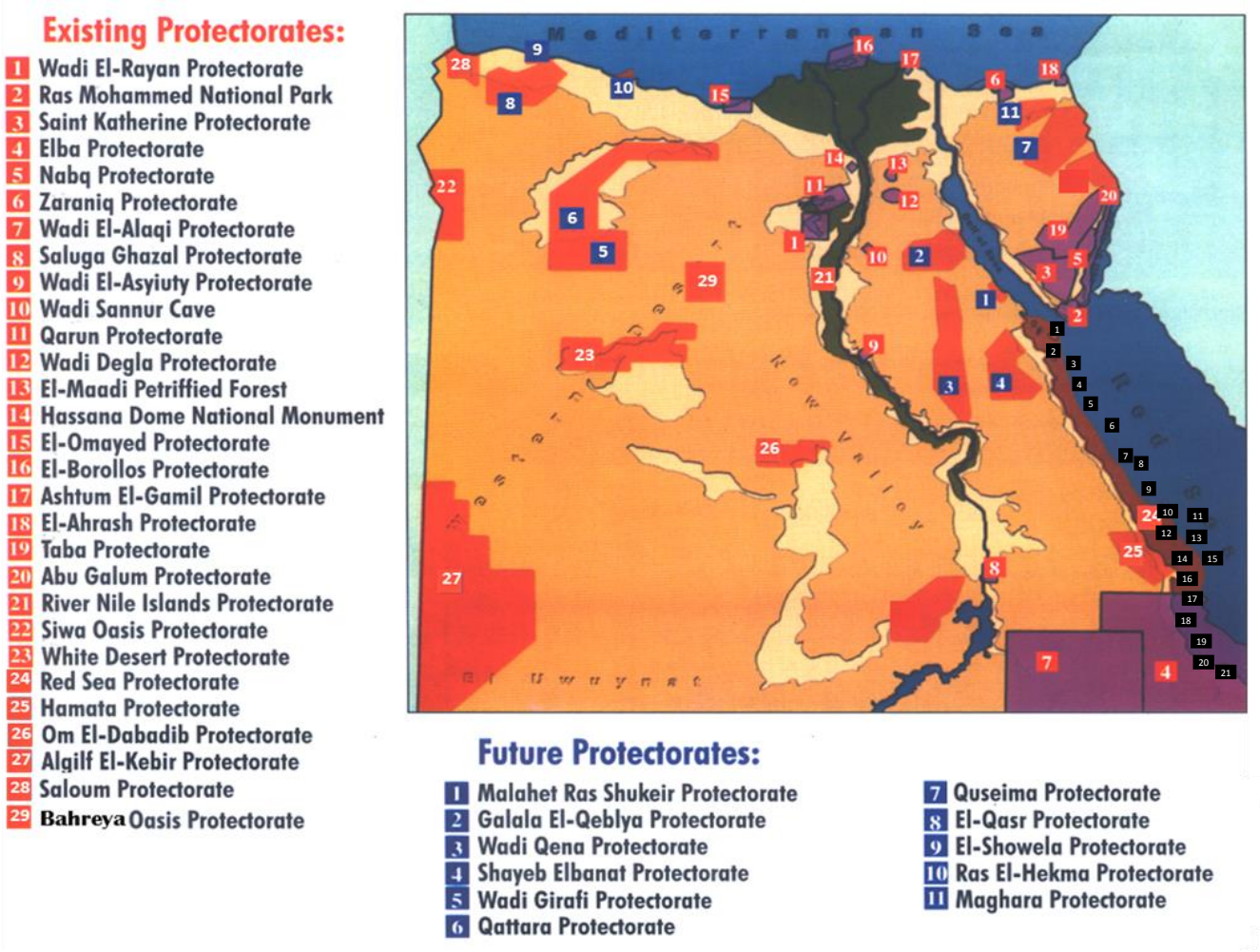


Figure (1-1) The famous ESAs that are suitable for ecotourism development
Source: The author based on EEAA and MSEA (2010); Ibrahim (2011)

Current Egyptian tourism development is based on mass tourism to maximise the number of tourists[3], irrespective of a site's capacity. The first effects of such development were the adverse impact on the environment (destroying coral reefs, increasing marine pollution and flora and fauna extinction) and on socio-cultural potentials through cultural changing of local communities (Hilmi et al. 2012; NPI 2003). The second effect of the mass tourism strategy was the rapid deterioration in the quality of the tourists to Egyptian areas, which has thus affected the economic benefits yielded from their activities. Therefore the Egyptian tourism product is being perceived as low-price and low-quality (Chemonics 2006a).

Furthermore, although the proponents of mass tourism considered that it is more profitable in gross terms than ecotourism, in fact ecotourism can be more lucrative in the long term. According to a study on the economic valuation of the coral reefs of Egypt in 2003, contemporary mass tourism development could keep on providing increasing economic benefits from diving and snorkelling in the short term (Cesar 2003). However, by 2012, the annual benefit would level off at US $200 million once the reef was no longer able to sustain the number of tourists and their impact. After this period, the value would start to drop continuously, to a low of US $100 million by 2050. However, in the case of ecotourism development the threats would be reduced and the annual benefits sustained over a long period of time at nearly US $200 million (Figure 1-2) (Cesar 2003). Consequently, the research argued ecotourism development in the long run could be more economically beneficial, as well as conserving and sustaining the natural environment and sustaining its socio-cultural resources. So, Egypt needs to endorse ecotourism development to mitigate the mass tourism issues and maximise its revenues (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

[3] Egyptian mass-tourism strategy focuses on the quantitative indicators such as the total number of tourists and the total number of tourist-nights, rather than on the qualitative indicators (Hilmi et al. 2012).

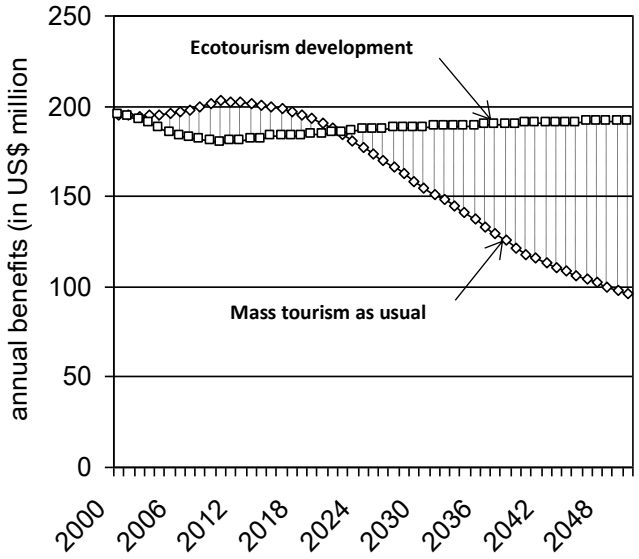


Figure (1-2) Changing annual benefits from diving and snorkelling (for both development approaches)
Source: Cesar (2003)

Thus, one of the targets of the Egyptian government, a couple of decades ago, was to increase its share of the tourism market through the development of coastal and historical mass tourism regions. However, the number of tourists in 2010[4] was only 14.1 million and the income from tourism did not exceed 15.8% of GDP, which was not commensurate with Egyptian environmental and socio-cultural potentials (CAPMAS 2014; WTTC 2011). Furthermore, several weakness in the Egyptian tourism offer could be identified, including poor tourism infrastructure (El-Barmelgy 2002) and a lack of diversification in the tourism products (Hilmi et al. 2012). There were also severe pressures on, and threats to, Egyptian tourism products because they were externally controlled by international tourism operators, and very vulnerable, not only to Egypt's political and internal situation, but also to that of the entire Middle East region (CAPMAS 2014; Rady & TDA 2002).

These challenges impeded effective tourism development in Egypt and this, coupled with increased local competition which has started to attract part of the Middle Eastern and North African tourist market – such as Turkey, Tunisia, Morocco,

[4] The research depended on statistics in 2010 which reflect the actual tourism demand before the unstable political situation after the 25th January Revolution in 2011.

Israel and Lebanon – has already impacted on the Egyptian share of the tourism market (WEF 2011). Hence the Egyptian rank[5] dropped from 58th out 124 in 2007 (WEF 2007) to 75th out 139 tourism countries all over the world in 2011[6] (WEF 2011). In other words, Egypt's rank dropped 17 positions over only four years.

Consequently, Egypt needs to seek to mitigate these challenges and widen its share of the tourism market by:-

- Supporting traditional tourism products (JICA 2000).
- Developing ecotourism as a new tourism product (Rady & TDA 2002; TDA et al. 2009).
- Integrating ecotourism and traditional tourism products to supplement the characteristics of each one. For example, Nile cruise, historical archaeology of the Upper Nile Region and marine tourism in the Red Sea (RS) region could be better integrated to offer a mutual support and benefit to the three regions together (JICA 2000; TDA et al. 2009).
- Enhancing the planning approach: To produce effective tourism development through those three approaches outlined above there is a need for all stakeholders to be involved, with the state, in the planning and implementing process. A collaborative planning approach could create an effective partnership between the state and other tourism stakeholders (Bonilla 2008; EC-2 and EC-8)[7].

The complexity of the ecotourism development Ecotourism has been depicted as a system that includes organic interrelationships (Gunn, 1994a cited in Araujo 2000) between three sub-systems: ecotourism (services, activities and infrastructure), natural

[5] This ranking is according to travel and tourism competitiveness reports published by the World Economic Forum (WEF) every two years.

[6] The effects of the political turmoil are not yet captured by the data discussed within this report because it was completed by March 2011.

[7] A reference to the interviewee/s: the acronyms refer to the interviewee groups: EC= Experts & Consultants in ecotourism development or participatory planning, PS = An employee in the Public Sector, PrS = Representative of the Private Sector bodies, NG = A member of NGO boards, LC = A member of the key persons of the Local Communities, T= Representative of the ecotourists, FIO = A member of the Funder and International Organisations; and the number refers to the serial number of the interviewee in each group.

and cultural diversity, and local communities. Furthermore, there are large numbers of relevant stakeholders who are interested in, affected and influenced by the ecotourism system, such as community organisations and individuals, tourism industry members, regional and national governmental agencies, private sector, NGOs and funders, etc. (Bonilla 2008). The ecotourism planning process has to consider this complexity and the variety of the stakeholder interests to achieve effective and sustainable development through effective participation and collaboration between all relevant stakeholders (Bonilla 2003).

Accordingly, through overlaying the results of the above points it is evident that there is a need to develop a practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning (CEP) which will enhance the implementation of ecotourism in particular and more generic development plans.

1.2 The research focus

This research therefore seeks to develop a framework for operationalising the collaborative approach in regional planning using ecotourism as a case study. There are two main tasks in this research. First to develop an idealised conceptual framework for the successful operationalisation of collaborative ecotourism planning that emerges from the literature review and lessons learned from examples of international ecotourism planning. The second is concerned with examining and evaluating the planning process of Egyptian ecotourism initiatives through the lens of the conceptual framework.

The research will focus on the regional level of ecotourism development planning for a number of reasons.

- The regionalisation approaches are the most appropriate for ecotourism development as ecotourists prefer to move around from site to site seeking different experiences during their ecotour (WWF, 1995).
- Inskeep (1991) asserted that regional planning provides the best opportunities for achieving sustainable tourism goals.

- Regional planning is considered the best scale to take account of relationships between national and local planning priorities and policies, and also between various environmental, socio-cultural, economic, and political concerns. Therefore, ecotourism planning at the regional scale has high potential to combine local and national tourism plans together within a regional development context (Araujo 2000).
- It is important to implement regional ecotourism planning into national development, especially in large developing countries such as Egypt, because it is difficult for national/central planning to address the specific planning needs of the various regions in the country.
- Ecotourism is a multi-dimensional and fragmented activity; it encompasses varying types of small business industries and services for both ecotourists and the local population. Therefore, a regional planning approach for ecotourism is essential to ensure that all the dimensions of the ecotourism industry are developed and managed harmoniously to meet visitors and local residents' needs in a particular ecotourism destination (Tosun & Jenkins 1996).
- Ecotourism planning at the regional scale is critical to alleviate the centralisation and lack of integration between the governmental authorities in developing countries (Jamal & Getz 1995a).
- Finally, in general it is considered more convenient for addressing the complex domains of certain countries (Araujo 2000).

1. 3 Research aims and objectives

The main aim of this research can be stated as:

> To design a practical framework for operationalising a collaborative approach (CA) in regional planning using ecotourism development in Egypt as a case study.

The outcome would be to enhance the implementation of plans. In order to achieve this aim, the main question for the research is:

How can the CA be merged and operationalised in the regional ecotourism planning process in Egypt within the context of government fragmentation and the multiplicity of stakeholder interests?

A number of research objectives can therefore be identified.

Objective one To critically review the requirements of ecotourism development, and the potential of the collaborative planning approach (CPA) to address these requirements. This objective requires an extensive literature review to cover the following questions:

- What are the key fundamentals of ecotourism?
- What is the ecotourism development system and what are the interrelationships between its sub-systems?
- What are the requirements of successful ecotourism development to enhance the plans' implementation?
- What are the key fundamentals and process of the CPA?
- What are the advantages and limitations of the CPA?
- What are the critical factors for successful stakeholder collaboration during the planning process?

Objective two To develop an idealised conceptual framework for successful collaborative ecotourism planning (CEP). This objective requires an extensive literature review to cover the following questions:

- How can the stakeholder network be built during the process?
- What are the methods of stakeholder involvement in the planning process?
- What are the influential factors in stakeholder collaboration within the planning process?
- How can the collaborative planning process and outcomes be evaluated?
- What are the key challenges and barriers for operationalising the collaborative planning approach?

Objective three To evaluate the planning process of Egyptian ecotourism initiatives through the lens of the conceptual framework (objective two) in order to identify the gaps in and the obstacles to stakeholder involvement. This objective requires a massive empirical fieldwork study to address the following questions:

- What is the existing process of ecotourism planning in Egyptian initiatives?
- What are the gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement in the current planning process compared with the conceptual framework?
- What was the extent of the stakeholder collaboration during the planning process of the Egyptian initiatives?
- What are the barriers to applying CEP in Egypt?

Objective four To develop a practical framework for CEP to enhance the implementation of the regional ecotourism development plans in Egypt. CEP will be built based on the theoretical conceptual framework (objective two) and evaluation of the contemporary Egyptian ecotourism initiatives (objective three). To achieve this objective requires answering the following questions:

- What are the recommendations to fill the gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement in the current planning process and mitigate the barriers that have hindered an acceptable level of stakeholder engagement during this process?
- What is the practical framework that could enhance the implementation of regional development in general and ecotourism in particular?

1.4 Research Methodology

In order to address the research aim and objectives, the case study is the most appropriate research strategy for this thesis.

Yin (2014) has indicated that a case study is the preferred strategy when the focus is on a contemporary issue within a real-life context. This particular research investigates regional development planning using ecotourism as a contemporary social phenomenon in a real-life context. The research attempts to analyse and evaluate the ecotourism initiatives, and clarify their potentials and constraints in order to develop a

practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning that could enhance the implementation of ecotourism in particular and, more generically, development plans.

According to the research objectives, the appropriate sources of case study evidence are: review of the **documentation** of regional development and Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives combined with overt **observations** carried out in the focal government bodies before **conducting interviews** with ecotourism experts and stakeholders, which will be undertaken in two phases. These interviews are considered superior to other data-gathering methods (Kumar 2005), particularly for understanding and documenting the opinions and experiences of ecotourism planning experts and stakeholders, which will be essential for analysing and evaluating the planning process within specific initiatives before proposing a modified framework for Egypt. More details of the research data collection strategy will be explained and justified in Chapter Five. The following section provides a broad overview of the research strategy.

Figure (1-3) shows the stages that are to be applied to produce a practical framework for CEP. It will be a reference for ecotourism development planning in Egypt. The research plan consists of three main stages, each one designed to respond to a specific research objective and pave the way for the next stage. These stages are as follows:

Developing the conceptual and analytical framework This phase aims to fulfil the first two research objectives. It is concerned with essential background knowledge to evolve the conceptual framework for CEP to avoid and overcome some of the deficits in the current Egyptian planning process. It is divided into three parts. The first part looks at critical reviews of ecotourism development requirements through: reviewing the key fundamentals of ecotourism, its importance for mitigating mass-tourism issues and expanding tourism marketing, the ecotourism development system and the interrelationships between its sub-systems, as well as seeking the requirements of successful ecotourism development. The second part discusses the potential of collaborative planning to address the ecotourism requirements outlined in

the prior part. This part includes reviewing the key fundamentals and process of the CPA as well as defining the characteristics of a successful planning process; and, finally, investigating how to get the active participation of all the stakeholders throughout the process. In the last part, the conceptual framework of CEP will be developed, based on the previous two parts. This framework is considered one of the most important outputs at this stage that could be used to evaluate the current Egyptian process and propose a new one.

Evaluating ecotourism in practice This stage aims to achieve the third research objective and provide the base for developing the fourth. It will contain three main sections. The first section provides a critical review of the Egyptian context for ecotourism development planning. The section will further explore the evolution of Egyptian tourism strategies and the challenges in tourism development. The potential of ecotourism to mitigate these challenges will be outlined, including a brief description of ecotourism development institutions. This section also explores the evolution of the planning system, regulations and levels. The second section concerns the case study design. Case studies are used here to test and investigate the theoretical studies in a particular and practical context; relevant case studies will be selected based on: a) identifying ecotourism initiatives in Egypt, b) classifying the planning methodologies of these initiatives, and c) selecting the case study. The third section discusses the template for data collection and analysis that will be used in each of the case studies. This consists of:

1- Critical review of the document plan;
2- Review of the other documents or plans covering the initiatives' geographical locations to explore their relationship with ecotourism plans;
3- Multiple visits to the governmental bodies (EEAA, TDA and the Governorates in which the cases are located). These visits will: i) develop a holistic understanding of the process of development planning, and the relationships among and between stakeholders during this process; ii) develop positive relationships between the researcher and key informants in

the governmental bodies. These relationships are valuable to the logistics of setting up the fieldwork, such as nominating the interviewees and gaining access to potential documents; and iii) develop the questions of the interview using terms that make sense to the interviewees;

4- The first stage of the interview is designed to update knowledge on the development planning process in general and ecotourism in particular, as well as to identify the official story of the case studies. It will also be to define the main stakeholder groups that were involved in this process to map out an interviewee network of critical stakeholder groups in each case and examine who is involved and who is not, in order to interview members of both groups in the second interview stage;
5- Building the actual planning framework and the stakeholder involvement activities during this planning process in each case; and
6- The second stage of the interview will focus on evaluating the ecotourism planning process that was experienced in each case (outlined in the prior step) based on the idealised conceptual framework to identify the gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement in the planning process. These interviews will also be concerned with the barriers that prevent an acceptable level of stakeholder participation during the planning process.

Adapting the theoretical framework to Egyptian circumstances The final stage of this research methodology will focus on achieving the fourth objective of the research. This stage is structured around two main parts; the first focuses on synthesising the findings of the critical evaluation of the case studies, providing a number of recommendations to fill the gaps in the current planning process and mitigating the barriers to stakeholder engagement in order to enhance regional development planning in general and ecotourism in particular. This part will pave the way for developing a practical framework for CEP in the second part. This framework will be based on the combination of the empirical studies' outputs (stage two) and theoretical studies (stage one).

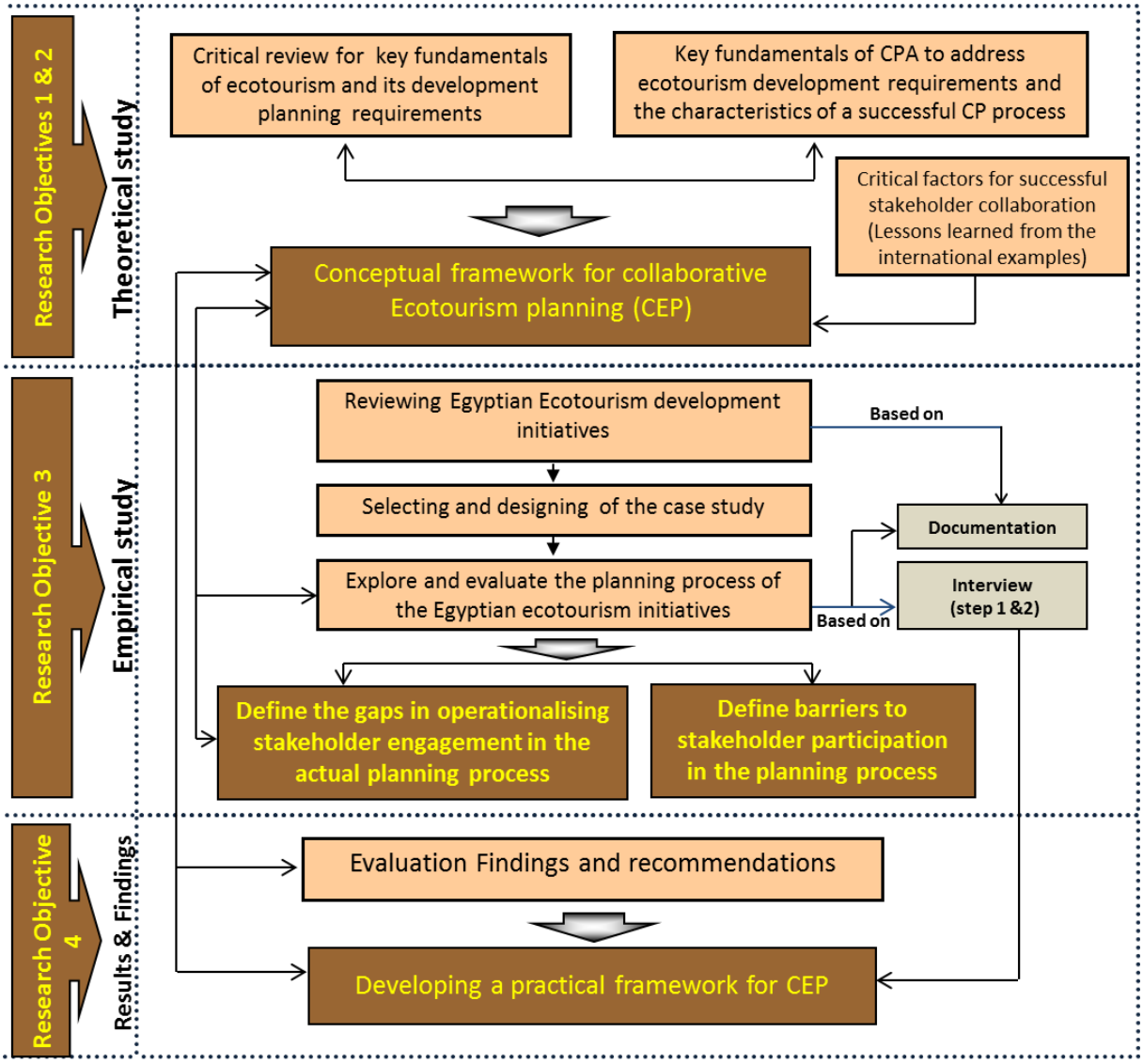


Figure (1-3) The research methodology
Source: The author

1.5 The thesis structure

This thesis is organised in three parts, as shown in Figure (1-4) which illustrates the structure of the thesis as well as showing how the structure links to the objectives of the thesis and the sources of evidence upon which the chapters are based. The three parts and nine chapters can be summarised as follows.

Part One: Introduction and conceptual framework

This part is divided into three chapters and is designed to cover the first and second research objectives.

Chapter One: Introduction to the research This chapter introduces the rationale of the research problem, and the research focus. It sets out the research aims, objectives and questions. It states the research stages and gives a summary of the research strategy and the methods employed, before finally outlining the structure of the thesis as a whole.

Chapter Two: Ecotourism and Collaborative planning approach This chapter is concerned with the key fundamentals of ecotourism and its development system as well as the requirements of successful ecotourism development. This chapter also covers the potentials of CPA to address the ecotourism development requirements to enhance the plans' implementation. This chapter concludes by lessons learned from the international examples in defining the critical factors for successful stakeholder collaboration during the ecotourism planning process.

Chapter Three: Developing the conceptual framework This chapter aims to develop an idealised conceptual framework for CEP. This chapter is structured around two main parts: the first will be to investigate the rationale of the conceptual framework. The second will discuss, in detail, the components of a conceptual framework required for successful collaborative ecotourism planning. These components are: i) how can a stakeholder network be built; ii) how can the stakeholder engagement in the planning process be improved; iii) defining the evaluation procedures; and iv) defining the obstacles to the stakeholder involvement and collaboration during the process.

Part Two: Evaluating ecotourism in practice

This part can be considered the core of the research and is divided into four chapters. It is designed to achieve the third research objective of the thesis.

Chapter Four: Egyptian context for ecotourism development planning The chapter aims to understand the Egyptian circumstances in order to pave the way for evaluating specific initiatives. The Egyptian context can be explained through three sections. The first provides an overview of Egypt in terms of its geographical location, social and cultural characteristics, administrative system, and economic context. The second section focuses on ecotourism development through the evolution of Egyptian tourism strategies and the challenges in tourism development. The potential of ecotourism development to mitigate these challenges will also be outlined. The final section of the chapter explores the evolution of the planning system, regulations and levels in Egypt.

Chapter Five: Operationalising the research This chapter is concerned with the methodology the research has utilised to examine and evaluate specific Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives. Operationalising the research discusses how and why the specific case studies will be chosen. It also describes the template for data collection and analysis that will be used in each of the case studies.

Chapter Six: Egyptian ecotourism initiatives This chapter aims to provide the context for the three case studies in order to provide the basis for understanding and analysis.

Chapter Seven: Evaluating and analysing the Egyptian initiatives This chapter examines and evaluates three Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives through the lens of the conceptual framework to identify the gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement in the actual planning processes of these initiatives as well as the barriers that hindered an acceptable level of stakeholder participation in these processes.

Part Three: Results and findings

This part contains two chapters that are designed to fulfil the last research objective as well as the final findings and the research conclusions.

Chapter Eight: Developing the practical framework for CEP This chapter aims to develop a practical framework for operationalising CEP in Egypt. It is divided into three sections: the first summarises the findings of the Egyptian initiatives. The second section is designed to provide a number of recommendations to address the deficiencies in the planning procedures and mitigate the barriers to engagement of governmental and non-governmental stakeholders in order to pave the way for the third section, developing a practical framework for CEP in order to enhance the implementation of the ecotourism plans.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions and future research This chapter draws out the final conclusions that are created through the thesis, as well as presenting the research contributions and discussing the future research trends in the implementation of the ecotourism plans.

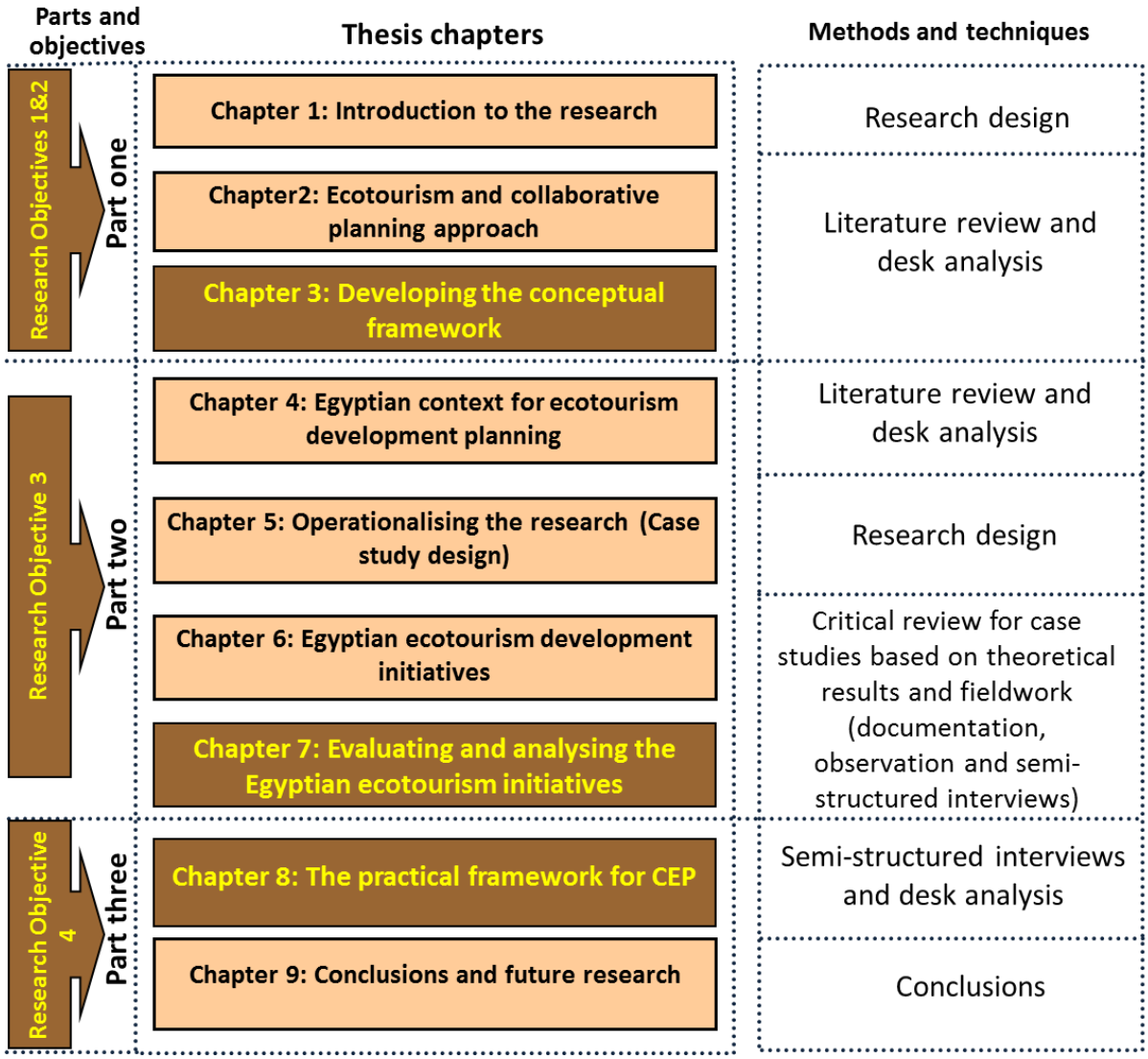


Figure (1-4) The thesis structure
Source: The author

Chapter Two: Critical review of ecotourism development and the potential of collaborative planning to address its requirements

Chapter Two

Critical review of ecotourism development and the potential of collaborative planning to address its requirements

The purpose of this chapter is to address the first objective of this research, which is concerned with critically reviewing the requirements of ecotourism development, and the potential of collaborative planning to address these requirements. This chapter is organised into two main parts. The first part (2.1) focuses on a critical review of ecotourism through three sections: 2.1.1 reviews the key fundamentals of ecotourism; section 2.1.2 discusses the ecotourism development system; and section 2.1.3 investigates the requirements of successful ecotourism development to enhance the plans implementation. The second part (2.2) discusses the theoretical key fundamentals and process of the collaborative planning approach (CPA) as well as defining the characteristics of a successful planning process. This is achieved through four sections: 2.2.1 discusses the collaborative planning (CP) definition and the main incentive for its use; 2.2.2 defines the advantages and limitations of the CPA; 2.2.3 discusses the collaborative planning process; and the final section, 2.2.4, investigates the critical factors for successful stakeholder collaboration during the planning process.

2.1 Critical review of ecotourism

Ecotourism is a term which has grown as a consequence of frustration with traditional forms of tourism, which have, in general, ignored socio-cultural and environmental features of destinations in favour of a profit-centred approach to the delivery of tourism products (Fennell 2008). Nevertheless, there is an absence of any consensus and consequently much debate about what the term really means. It is usually used interchangeably with other terms such as soft tourism, alternative tourism, responsible tourism, adventure tourism, community-based tourism, and nature-based tourism (Butler 1991). Ecotourism as a term evolved in an endeavour to

prevent the issues and effects that result from conventional mass tourism (Yogi 2010). Its theoretical frame reflects eco-centric situations and supplies a philosophical basis that changes the focus of tourism to nature and local communities (Wearing and McDonald 2002 cited in Pipinos & Fokiali 2009). The first appearance of the term, around the 1970s, led to long scientific and academic argumentation about its exact conceptual definition. The next section reviews the key fundamentals of ecotourism in order to define it, the main differences compared with traditional forms of tourism, the potential benefit of ecotourism, and the patterns of ecotourism development.

2.1.1 Reviewing the key fundamentals of ecotourism

Definitions of ecotourism

Although there are a variety of ecotourism definitions in the literature, most have used terms such as: nature- and local culture-based, ecologically sustainable; concerned with natural and biodiversity conservation; and involving ecotourists and local residents in education (Chiutsi et al. 2011; Himoonde 2007), as well as ensuring that ecotourism should be beneficial to local communities (Buchsbaum 2004). This research adopts the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition as the operational one, because it is effective in capturing a comprehensive description of the essential ecotourism features that distinguish it from other tourism patterns. The IUCN defined ecotourism in 1996 as '*environmentally responsible travel to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features – both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations'* (Wood 2002, p.9). This definition emphasises that ecotourism is dependent on both natural and socio-cultural resources. The three main pillars of ecotourism can be seen, as Figure (2-1) shows, as:

Figure (2-1) Ecotourism components according to the IUCN definition
Source: Mader (2010)

- Promoting the conservation of the natural and cultural resources through: i) raising the awareness of both the local population and ecotourists in appreciating and conserving local natural and cultural assets (UNWTO 2002); and ii) creating economic justification for managing and minimising the negative impacts of ecotourism activities (Stone 2002).
- Profitable for local communities: ecotourism development provides the local people with social and economic benefits such as creating jobs and income opportunities as well as providing opportunities to improve infrastructures (Debnath 2011).
- Participation of local communities in running of the ecotourism activities. This is because they are more familiar with natural and cultural potentials than others who may come from outside of the region. Also, local communities are able to prevent abuse of these resources and activate appropriate monitoring systems (Mader 2010; TDA et al. 2003). In order to ensure that local communities benefit from ecotourism, they should be involved in all phases of planning and implementation. Unfortunately, most local people have rarely been a part of the planning process, nor are they asked about their vision for the region (Buchsbaum 2004).

Accordingly, it is suggested that successful ecotourism development requires the achievement of ecological sustainability through appreciating the components of the natural environment alongside social and economic sustainability, by providing economic benefits to local communities in both the planning and running of any ecotourism development. Chiutsi et al. (2011) have asserted that any successful

ecotourism development has to find a favourable link between environmental and socio-cultural sustainability and financial viability.

What then is the relation between ecotourism and sustainable tourism? Wood (2002) emphasised that ecotourism is a sub-set of the sustainable tourism field (see Figure 2-2), which emphasises the way that ecotourism can be situated within several sustainable tourism forms. It also illustrates that ecotourism is primarily a sustainable version of nature-based tourism. At the same time, including rural and cultural tourism elements that are consistent with environmental, social and community values promotes cultural and environmental interaction. Additionally, ecotourism is concerned with the satisfaction of ecotourists by virtue of providing a distinct tourism experience (Western AsutraliaTourism 2006).

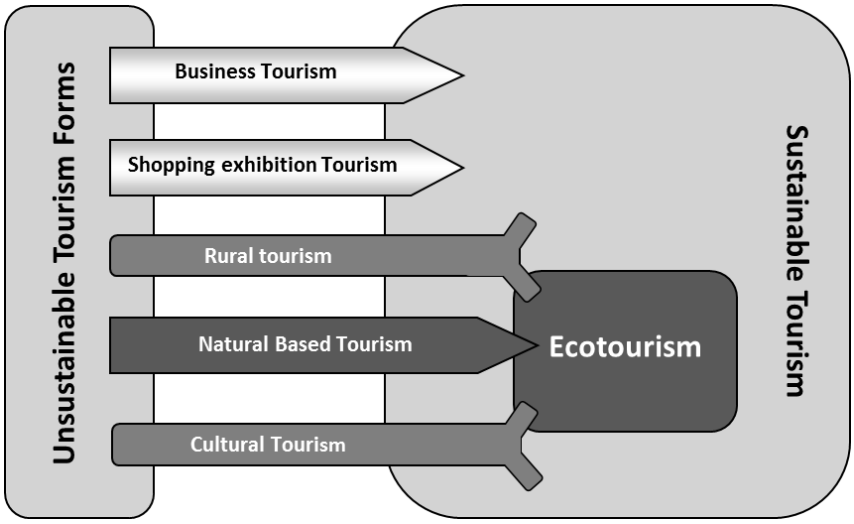


Figure (2-2) The concept of ecotourism
Source: Wood (2002)

Ecotourism vs the traditional tourism forms

Mass tourism is considered as the more traditional form of tourism development. It has been criticised as being non-locally oriented and providing very little money being spent within the destination to generate employment and income opportunities for local communities. Some authors such as López-Guzmán (2011) have asserted that mass tourism can be associated with a lot of negative impacts and that the world should be looking to promote alternative forms of tourism. Ecotourism can be seen as a response to environmental and cultural degradation associated with

mass tourism, particularly in developing countries (Yogi 2010). Mass tourism characteristics are the polar opposite to ecotourism features (Weaver 1998). For example:

- Mass tourism is 'large-scale', designed to maximise the income for tourist agencies without much concern for the impacts on the physical, social, and cultural environments. Ecotourism is usually considered 'small-scale', to minimise the environmental stress and impacts on the local environment as well as providing a high-quality experience to the ecotourists (Carballo-Sandoval 2001).
- Mass tourism is 'externally controlled'. It is dominated by international tourism companies and tour operators and so local communities do not benefit from it. Ecotourism is 'locally controlled' by local NGOs or local tour operators that allow stronger economic linkages with other local economic sectors and minimise the leakage of benefits from the local communities (Weaver 1998).
- Mass tourism is highly commercialised, using international styles of luxury services and facilities which are not matched with the environment of the tourism areas. The accommodation is built at high density and is owned by large corporations. Ecotourism is moderately commercialised, with the service and facilities being complementary to the local environmental style. Ecotourism accommodation is low density, scattered throughout the area according to the carrying capacity of the receiving destination, and is owned by local people.
- Mass tourism has a high impact on the environment and local communities. Ecotourism is considered low-impact tourism because ecotourists are concerned with conserving the environment and respecting the culture and heritage of local communities (Carballo-Sandoval 2001).

Consequently, the problems associated with mass tourism contributed to the emergence of ecotourism as an alternative approach. Weaver (1998) claimed that mass tourism will contribute to its own downfall by destroying the environmental and

cultural attractions, which leads to mass tourists searching for new destinations. The second reason is a dissatisfaction with mass tourism products and the growing demand for tourism activities based on respecting and conserving the natural and cultural resources, as a result of tourists increasing environmental awareness (Buchsbaum 2004).

However, there is no guarantee that ecotourism will necessarily be any more environment-friendly than mass tourism, unless appropriate planning and management of ecotourism development occurs, by involving the local community at the core of this process (El-Barmelgy 2002).

Ecotourism benefits and impacts

Ecotourism has the potential to provide positive benefits and impacts on everyday life. Being aware of these from the outset can help to maximise the benefits and minimise the negative impacts, and these can be managed better at the start rather than looking for solutions once the negative impacts have occurred. Furthermore, failure to identify and confront such issues is likely to result in destruction of natural assets, which will be of no benefit to the local communities (Buchsbaum 2004). Table (2-1) represents an inventory of the potential benefits and impacts that may be associated with ecotourism development in developing countries. The impacts can be environmental, economic and socio-cultural categories being either direct or indirect benefits (Weaver 1998).

Table (2-1) Potential ecotourism benefits and impacts in developing countries (Weaver 1998)

categories		The ecotourism benefits	The ecotourism impact/cost
Environmental	Direct	- Incentives to promote conservation of the natural assets - Incentives for rehabilitating the altered habitats - Providing funds to manage and increase the size of protected areas - Ecotourists assist in ecology enhancement (donation and maintenance)	- Danger of exceeding the environmental carrying capacities - Generating residual waste - Impacts of ecotourist activities (wildlife observation, bird watching and hiking) - Difficulties in defining, measuring and monitoring impacts
	Indirect	- Using ecotourism to promote environmentalism - Ecotourism in protected areas provides various benefits for environment	-Impacts of environmental restructuring - Exposing a less benign pattern of ecotourism in fragile areas - Difficulties in the economic valuation of nature
Economic	Direct	- Providing revenue and job opportunities - Strong linkages with other local economic sectors to stimulate the economies of peripheral communities	- Starting costs such as acquisition of land, superstructure and infrastructure - Running expenses such as maintenance of infrastructure, promotion and payment
	Indirect	- High multiplier effects and indirect income and employment - Supporting cultural and heritage tourism - Providing economic benefits from sustainable activities in protected areas	- Uncertain revenues - Benefits leakage as result of non-local participation - Opportunity costs
Socio-Cultural	Direct	- Promoting community stability and well-being by economic revenues and local involvement in development - Aesthetic and spiritual benefits for local people and ecotourists - Raising environmental awareness between local communities - Access to a wide range of the local population	- Cultural and social clash - Imposes an elite alien value system - Diminishing local control through foreign experts and migration of job seekers
	Indirect		-Potential for local resentment or antagonism - Ecotourist opposition to some aspects of local lifestyle like hunting, slash-and-burn wood

Sources: Weaver (1998, p. 21)

The ecotourism patterns

Due to the variety of ecotourism definitions and the variety of tourism operators that have different interpretations and meanings of the ecotourism label, certain kinds of tourism activities may be described as ecotourism while the reality is that the label of 'ecotourism' is being used without applying its fundamentals. Hence different forms of ecotourism exist which Weaver (2005) has categorised as a continuum from hard to soft ecotourism.

The hard–soft spectrum refers to a wide range of activities that might have different environmental impacts and attract people with different sets of values and motivations. The terms 'hard ecotourism' and 'soft ecotourism' refer to '*the level of dedication of the ecotourist to the experience of physical effort involved and the level of interest in the natural attraction'* (Ormas 2001, P.28). Some literature has used alternative descriptions for hard terms such as active and deep ecotourism and for soft terms such as passive and shallow ecotourism.

Hard ecotourism represents one end of the ecotourism spectrum. Hard ecotourists are associated with a high level of environmental commitment and enhancement of environmental sustainability through improving the destination setting and involvement in actions that contribute to the well-being of the environment (through donations and volunteer activities such as tree planting). Additionally, the ecotourists change their behaviour and lifestyle during the trips to live basically with minimum comforts and services, without undue strain on local resources. The ecotourists in this pattern are travelling in difficult circumstances for long durations within the natural features in order to build actual natural experiences (Acott, Trobe & Howard 1998; Agyeman 2011; Ormas 2001). Hard ecotourists often tend to be small groups of environmentally aware people. Their trips are distinguished by a range of characteristics such as consideration of the intrinsic natural values and respecting the culture of the local communities, often trying to engage in their activities without disturbing the local people. Moreover, ecotourists in this pattern are interested in doing physically and mentally challenging activities during their travel. This pattern of

ecotourism tries to contribute to sustaining both the quality of the natural environment and the economic resources at the same time (Weaver 2002; Weaver & Lawton 2002).

By contrast, the soft ecotourists are associated with a moderate level of environmental commitment. They are following the principles of 'steady state' sustainability, which means maintaining the balance of the existing situation, and leaving the region in the same condition as when they arrived. They might feel that by visiting a region with aesthetic values they need to share in the conservation of the region's resources, by generating income which can be used for the management and monitoring of these potentials. Soft ecotourists are also often involved in the ecotourism activities as a part of a multi-purpose trip and are utilising a variety of on-site services. They tend to travel to well-serviced and accessible locations (Acott, Trobe & Howard 1998; Weaver 2002). Soft ecotourists always travel in large groups that are occasionally interested in the natural attractions but wish to enjoy their experiences based on a more superficial and highly mediated level. They are less prepared to accept discomfort as part of their experience. They also are content to spend a part of their trip, which is usually a short duration, at an interpretive centre surrounded by traditional tourists (Ormas 2001).

In the tourism literature there is some confusion between soft ecotourism and mass tourism because soft ecotourism verges on mass tourism and it includes some of the mass tourism characteristics in terms of the volume of the groups and reliance on well-serviced locations. However, the main difference between the latest form of soft ecotourism and mass tourism would be in the way the experience is promoted. The activities of soft ecotourism depend on pristine natural areas and cultural resources and are promoted as preventing the loss of cultural and environmental identity of an area, i.e. its commodification (Acott, Trobe & Howard 1998; Weaver 2001; Weaver 2005).

This distinction between at either end of the hard-soft spectrum enables us to explain the reported conflict with regard to the size of the ecotourism sector. Whilst most ecotourists are located somewhere between hard and soft ecotourists on the

spectrum, different sources have claimed that the proportion of ecotourism as a percentage of total leisure travel might be as low as 2% or as high as 20-25%. The variations are dependent on whether soft ecotourism is included in the figures or not (Weaver 2001).

Table (2-2) Characteristics of Hard and Soft Ecotourism spectrum

Hard (Active & Deep)	**Ecotourism spectrum**	**Soft** (Passive & Shallow)
Strong environmental commitment		Moderate environmental commitment
Enhancement sustainability		Steady-state sustainability
Specialised trips		Multi-purpose trips
Long trips		Short trips
Small groups		Large groups
Physically active		Physically passive
Few if any services expected		Services expected
Emphasis on personal experience		Emphasis on interpretation

Source:Weaver (2005); Weaver and Lawton (2002)

After reviewing and discussing the key fundamentals of ecotourism, such as ecotourism definition, the main difference compared with mass tourism, ecotourism types and its potential benefits and impacts, the research turns to understanding the ecotourism development system and the interrelationships between its components to see how a balance between the system's components can be achieved.

2.1.2 The ecotourism development system

From the ecotourism concept and its characteristics mentioned above, it can be emphasised that ecotourism development has been depicted as a system that includes organic interrelationships (Gunn, 1994a cited in Araujo 2000) between three sub-systems: ecotourism (services, activities and infrastructure), natural and cultural diversity, and local communities. Furthermore, there are several actors or stakeholders who can affect, and who are influenced, by the ecotourism development (key players and support players), as shown in Figure 2-3. Ecotourism is often considered to be a potential strategy for promoting conservation of natural ecosystems through

generating revenues, environmental education and the involvement of local people while, at the same time, promoting sustainable local development. That can be achieved through balancing the relationships between ecotourism system components. In the next part, the components of the ecotourism development system and the variables that are affected and influenced will be discussed.

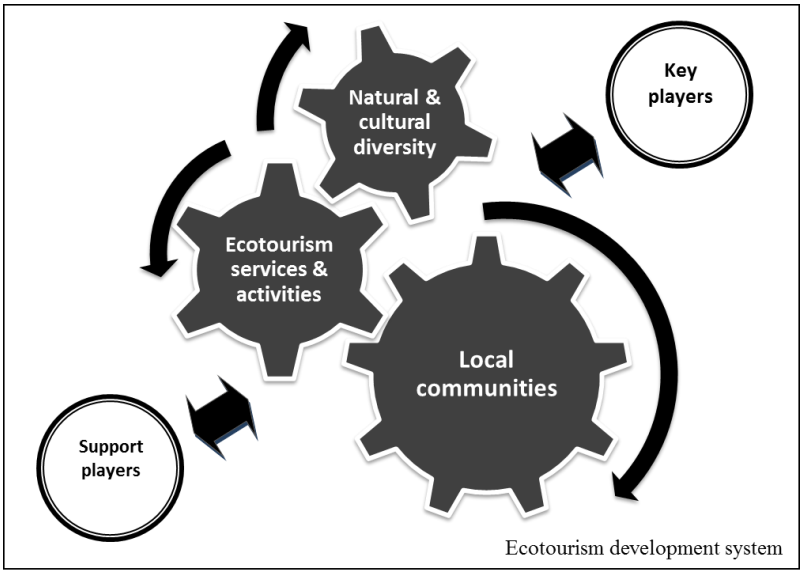


Figure (2-3) The components of an ecotourism development system
Source: The author

Ecotourism sub-system's interrelationships

An ecotourism development system emphasises that there are symbiotic relationships between its sub-systems local communities, natural and cultural diversity resources, and ecotourism services and activities (Figure 2-4). In an ideal ecotourism situation, these three components would each make positive contributions to the others and, furthermore, any strength in one component has implications for the others. Each sub-system has economic, social and environmental influences on other components, so interrelationships between them need to be discussed in order to identify any potentials for collaboration or conflicts (Himoonde 2007; Ross & Wall 1999).

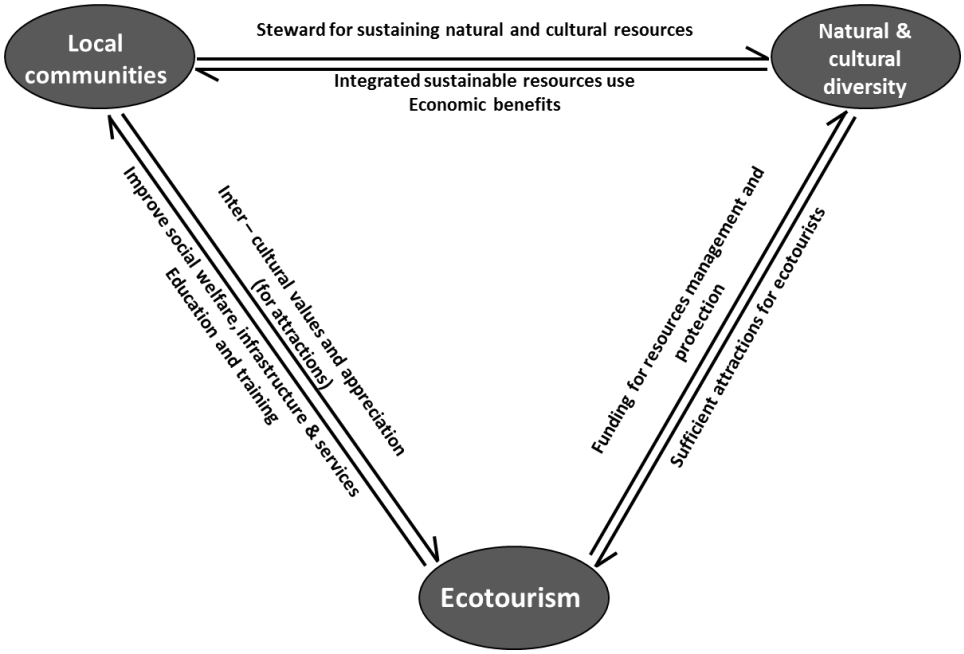


Figure (2-4) Ecotourism sub-systems' interrelationships
Source: The author based on Ross and Wall (1999)

A- Interrelationships between the diversity of natural and cultural resources and local communities

The relationship between the resources and the local community is symbiotic and their co-existence is a crucial factor for the success of the ecotourism development and then for enhancing a community's quality of life. From an economic view, the resources provide the residents with economic benefits through their participation in tour guiding or environmental conservation work. In terms of the social dimension, the ecotourism destination provides suitable education and training not only for raising the residents resource and cultural identity, but also for raising their awareness about natural conservation, which often promotes their support for resource protection (Himoonde 2007).

The local community in turn mainly influences the resources in terms of the environmental and social dimensions. Environmentally, residents should act as stewards of natural and cultural resources, and should be concerned with conserving local resources because abusing these resources not only influences the residents lives but also discourages the tourists from revisiting these resources. Therefore, sustaining the resource by minimising impacts is the first step for promoting ecotourism

destinations (Ross & Wall 1999). In social terms, community engagement in an ecotourism development planning process is invaluable in promoting the conservation of the resources, and provides the local people with a sense of control and ownership. Their willingness and support is seen as a necessary pre-requisite for the successful implementation of ecotourism development. Local residents will be motivated to be involved in the planning process if they anticipate that additional income and benefits will be locally produced, and that ecotourism development should not negatively influence their livelihoods (Brandon 1993 cited in Tsaur, Lin & Lin 2006).

B- Interrelationships between the diversity of natural & cultural resources and ecotourism

The diversity of resources influences ecotourism potential. Economically, the diversity of the natural and cultural resources represents a sufficient attraction for the ecotourists. In turn, ecotourists payment for entrance, parking, guiding services, etc. represents the main funding for resource management and protection. In social terms, ecotourists who visit regions with a diversity of resources often enjoy high-quality experiences with nature and culture. These experiences often make the ecotourists more willing to pay for these services and activities, and make donations for environment maintenance plans (Ross & Wall 1999).

Ecotourism also has the potential to cause damage. Environmentally, resources can be affected by a negative impact when the numbers of ecotourists exceed the limit of the carrying capacity of the area – which needs to be considered at the outset in the planning process. Turning to the social dimensions, a high-quality experience will often motivate the ecotourists to appreciate the diversity of natural and cultural resources and advocate their sustainability (Ross & Wall 1999). From the economic aspect, although ecotourism provides funding to support conservation of the resources, there is no income to protect if these resources are not able to provide sufficient attractions for the ecotourists (Tsaur, Lin & Lin 2006).

C- Interrelationships between local communities and ecotourism

The local communities can have positive social influences on ecotourism. Providing good interactions with the ecotourists that reduces any upheaval to local residents' daily life and enhances feelings and appreciation for local culture can in turn promote a willingness to revisit the area or encourage others to visit (Ross & Wall 1999; Tsaur, Lin & Lin 2006). Moreover, ecotourism benefits may help improve social welfare, infrastructure and services, and contribute to improved intercultural appreciation between the host communities and ecotourists. From an economic standpoint, ecotourism development can provide employment opportunities for local residents such as acting as guides, selling local goods, and providing accommodation to ecotourists.

However, ecotourism can also have a detrimental influence on the local communities. From an environmental perspective, some ecotourists cause damage to the environment; hence, local residents may develop negative perceptions about such activities, which can represent a 'barrier to sustainability'. In social terms, exceeding local carrying capacities may lead to issues such as traffic congestion, changing local social attitudes and a loss of traditional culture and language. From an economic standpoint, bringing in foreign employees and reducing opportunities for local residents can lead to losing local communities' support for the development (Miller 2001 cited in Tsaur, Lin & Lin 2006).

Avoiding the pitfalls of ecotourism development can often be handled through the active involvement of local communities in development planning processes. This will help to accomplish a balance in the ecotourism system, and the communities can gain tangible economic and social benefits. Moreover, such participation means that the benefits are less likely to leak out of the community (Ross & Wall 1999).

2- Players (stakeholders) in the Ecotourism system

There are a wide range of players with varying interests in, and influence on, ecotourism development. A rich body of the literature organises them into two main groups. The first are the key players that have a prominent role. The key players

include community organisations and individuals, tourism industry bodies, a variety of government officials and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). The second group are support players, which includes funders, academics and ecotourists. All these players or stakeholders should be represented in ecotourism development planning. The cornerstone to the success of ecotourism development is the formulation of strong partnerships between all relevant stakeholders to meet the multiple goals of conservation and equitable development (see Figure 2-5). These partnerships may be difficult to organise and maintain because the stakeholder groups have conflicting interests, but creating relationships is crucial to accommodate these conflicts (Drumm & Moore 2002; Hvenegaard 1994; Wood 2002). Moreover, communication and collaboration among such a wide range of stakeholders is required to create shared resolutions to meet their local needs. The ecotourism stakeholders can be clarified as being:

Key players (stakeholders):

Local communities: They are one of the main key players that must be involved in the ecotourism planning process. Local communities include all those who are resident in, or near, ecotourism development areas. The developers should understand that the local communities are not a homogeneous group. Indeed, even within one small community there will be a diversity of people with a range of views and experiences.

Tourism industry: This involves a broad variety of people such as tour operators, travel agents, restaurant owners and tour guides. The majority of this group will operate as part of the private sector.

Government officials: They include officials from government agencies concerned with ecotourism development planning such as tourism, natural resources, protected areas, education, finances and transportation. The officials who participate in the ecotourism development processes should be drawn from national, regional and local levels.

Non-Governmental Organisations: They are crucial players because they can bring together all the relevant stakeholders of ecotourism development for face-to-face discussion, mitigate their conflicts and build consensus. Discussion fora are a good way of communicating with a great number of individual and organisational stakeholders. Additionally, NGOs can play various roles in an ecotourism development process, such as training , advising, or acting as business partners with either tourism agencies or local communities (Drumm & Moore 2002; Hvenegaard 1994; Lindberg et al. 1997).

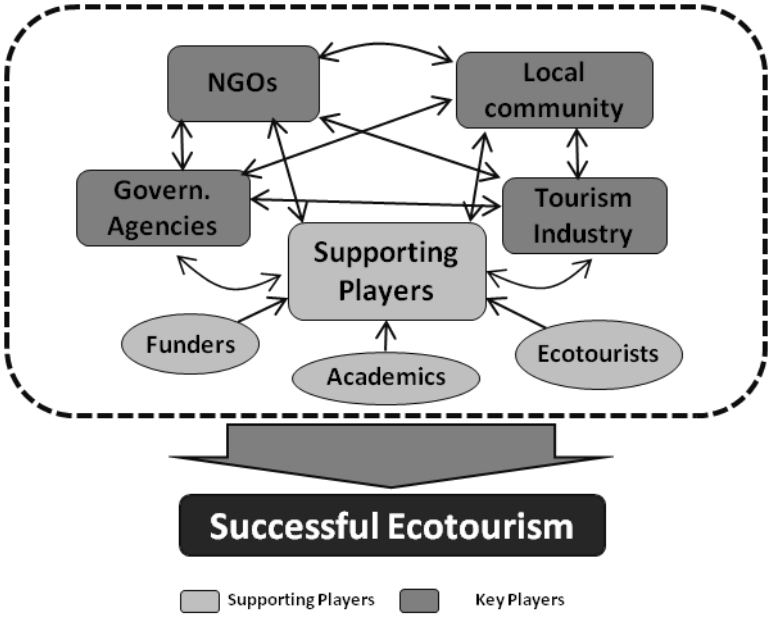


Figure (2-5) Players (stakeholders) in the Ecotourism system
Source: The author based on Drumm and Moore (2002)

Supporting Players (stakeholders):

Funders: This means anybody who can fund the development of ecotourism through loans or grants. These bodies include financial institutions and multilateral donor agencies such as the World Bank, private investors, NGOs, and private banks. There are also many international NGOs based in the United States and Europe that provide funding and/or technical assistance to ecotourism development through the government agencies of developing countries, such as United States Agency for

International Development (USAID), Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and Cooperation Internationale Süd-Süd (CISS).

Academics at universities (researchers and staff) can play a valuable role within the planning process of ecotourism development. They can help to frame the issues and ensure that ecotourism development proposals are likely to meet the stated goals. This is because they have a scientific way of thinking and they may be more aware than others of the constraints and potentials of the development.

Ecotourists are one of the most vital groups of participants in the process of ecotourism development because they represent the target group of the development. The participation of a number of existing ecotourists as representatives in the planning process will provide significant information about the ecotourist profile and requirements from destinations in order to enhance the supply of ecotourism activities and facilities to meet their demands (Drumm & Moore 2002; Hvenegaard 1994; Kreg Lindberg 1997).

2.1.3 The requirements of successful ecotourism development

A major part of the literature has identified four pillars of ecotourism success: minimising environmental impacts, respecting the culture of local host communities, maximising social and economic benefits to local people, and maximising ecotourist satisfaction by providing a distinct tourism experience (Buchsbaum 2004; Debnath 2011; Tourism 1999; Wight 2002). To achieve these pillars the interrelationships within the ecotourism system as mentioned above should be positive, as Figure 2-6 shows. It is very unlikely to occur without the involvement of and collaboration between a wide range of relevant stakeholders (key and support) during the planning process (Drumm et al. 2004; Himoonde 2007). Ecotourism is a field that relies very heavily on effective planning both in terms of developing the strategy and implementation at all levels (Buchsbaum 2004). The significant requirements that must be taken into account during the planning process of ecotourism development include:

- Ecotourism cannot be developed as an isolated activity, because it is so interdependent upon other development projects. It should be seen as integrated with other development sectors and these interactions should be considered in the planning process to prevent conflict between outcomes (Buchsbaum 2004).
- Addressing fragmentation and building a strong interconnectivity between the government authorities that are concerned with the ecotourism development, such as planning and investment, environment and tourism, etc. (Debnath 2011).
- Ensuring full participation of local communities in the process of the ecotourism development to provide information, to feel a sense of ownership and helping to avoid negative social and environmental impacts (Buchsbaum 2004)
- Building multi-stakeholder participation during the whole planning process which involves consulting a wide spectrum of stakeholders (from inside and outside the destination) develops a sense of shared ownership. The mechanisms for the participation and consultation should be appropriate and vary according to each group of stakeholders to encourage the widest possible involvement (Wight 2002).
- The stakeholders should be committed to the final agreements and work together to implement them.
- Raising awareness and training about the ecotourism principles, development requirements and guidelines is a necessary and ongoing process for all stakeholders (Debnath 2011)

Consequently, in order to consider all these requirements, ecotourism development needs to move from a static traditional planning approach towards a more dynamic collaboration between relevant stakeholders and the planning domain. A collaborative planning approach provides a flexible process which evolves over time (Getz & Jamal 1994a). Such an approach is appropriate for coordinating the regional planning of ecotourism development by:-

- Addressing the interdependencies between the stakeholders and the fragmented control over ecotourism destinations;
- Harmonising conflicts; and
- Reaching shared solutions (Jamal & Getz 1995a).

Whilst, collaboration between stakeholders during any planning process including ecotourism development may appear simple in theory but in practice it is extremely complicated because of pre-existing conflicts of stakeholder interests and mistrust of government and because of centralised decision making and lack of a previous implementation of plans. However, involvement of a wide spectrum of stakeholders from the beginning stage of the planning process may mitigate these conflicts and reduce the scope for misinformation in the future (Buchsbaum 2004).

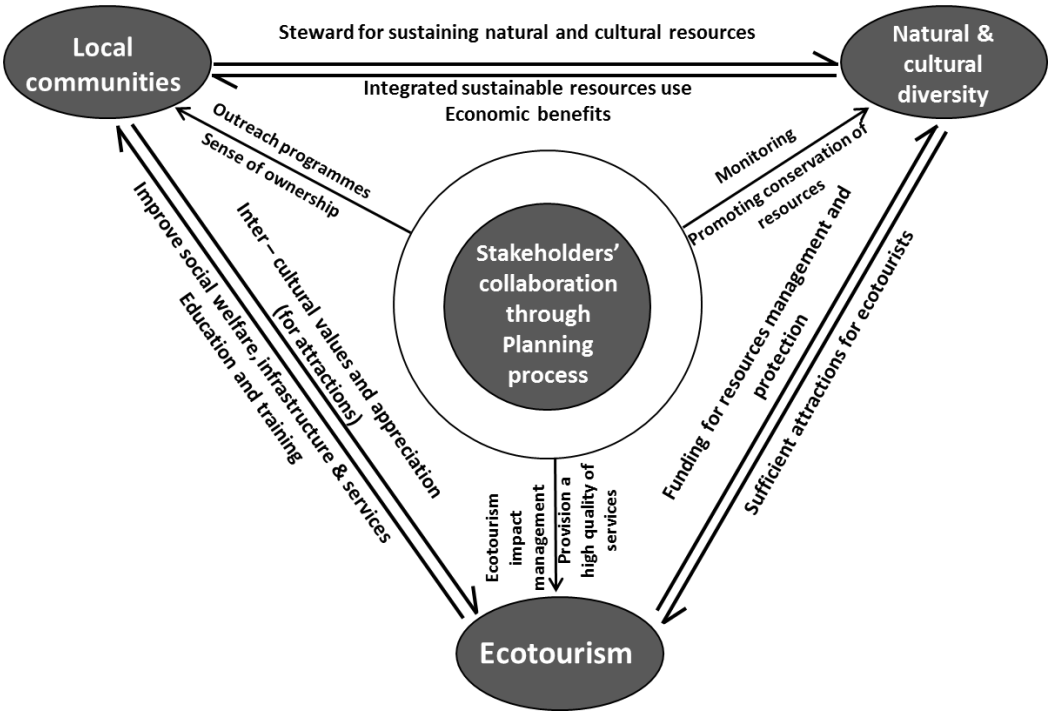


Figure (2-6) Stakeholders' collaboration throughout the planning process for the attainment of positive interrelationships within the ecotourism system
Source: The author based on Himoonde (2007); Ross and Wall (1999)

The next part of this chapter will discusses the theoretical key fundamentals and process of a collaborative planning approach (CPA).

2.2 Collaborative planning approach

Collaborative Planning (CP) is a relatively recent approach which emerged in the 1990s as a response to the deficits of traditional planning approaches which revolved around the central role of experts who utilise objective scientific analysis to produce a highly technical standard plan (Gunton, Peter & Day 2007; Morton 2009). The key deficit of the traditional process was its inability for the experts to harmonise inter-stakeholder conflicts (Bonilla 2008), which led to growing protests from stakeholders about expert formulated plans and a wide array of plans remaining unimplemented (Barragan 2006). CP is considered one of the most appropriate approaches to overcome these problems by broadening stakeholder participation and building a consensus during the planning process. CP also offers intangible benefits such as improving the stakeholder relationships, the sense of ownership between the actors that advances the plans and the willingness from all to implement them (Monjardin 2004)

2.2.1 Collaborative planning definition and main incentives for its use

From the many efforts that have been made to define the CP concept, the research drew together an operational definition relating to the objectives of the research. CP is a collective process for resolving conflicts and advancing a shared vision involving a wide range of stakeholders working together through face-to-face dialogue (Gray 1989; Kim 2002). Several common principles of collaboration can be extracted from this definition, which will be useful to conceptualise this term and understand its key characteristics. Firstly, CP deals with development potentials in a holistic and multi-disciplinary manner to try to achieve ‘win-win’ solutions by expanding the pie rather than focusing on how the pie is divided to solve the disputes between the stakeholders and agree a workable solution reflecting and respecting different interests (Monjardin 2004). Secondly, CP should be horizontally and vertically structured. The process should involve a wide range of stakeholders at different levels of governance who have a stake in, and are affected by, the issue (Godwin 1999). This should produce a better plan and increase the likelihood of

successful implementation (Albert, Gunton & Day 2003). Stakeholders should be involved throughout the whole process and have a voice both in framing the problem and shaping the solutions (Godwin 1999). Thirdly, face-to-face dialogue provides a good opportunity to listen, to learn from each other and then identify common goals, build trust, and seek consensus (Margerum 2011; WEF 2000). Furthermore, verbal communication helps to discuss and understand different points of view, as well as to create social and intellectual capital (Gray 1989). However, it requires an effective facilitator to support the negotiation process in a way that allows participants to work through a process smoothly, efficiently, and deliberatively. The better the deliberations and communication during the consensus-building process, the greater will be the confidence, and commitment to the plan during implementation phases (Imran, Alam & Beaumont 2011; Margerum 2011).

According to Gray (1989) and others, the main incentives for using CP are: the increasing pressures on the environment and local communities; shrinking the state's abilities to solve social problems; and a blurring of the boundaries between the public, private and community sectors, particularly at the local scale. All these require a transformation from a mono-institutional process and control from the top (hard system approach) to collaboration and alliance with a wide range of relevant stakeholders (soft system approach) to increase the likelihood of commitment to and support for development (Imran, Alam & Beaumont 2011; Kim 2002). These requirements can be provided by CP, which considers the relationships between the stakeholder groups and tries to bridge the gaps between them by recognising mutual interdependences in their interests and working together to make, and implement, shared decisions to solve the issues that brought them together (Araujo 2000). Moreover, CP can provide cost-effective solutions in regions by avoiding the costs of resolving long-running conflicts and improving sustainable development.

The potential outcomes of CP are not just tangible products that can be easily recognised such as agreed plans, strategies, actions or ideas (Innes & Booher 1999), but also intangible or undervalued benefits particularly when seen through the lens of

a traditional accountability. These include building up mutual trust between stakeholders and establishing new, or widening existing, personal and professional relationships which can provide true communication and joint problem solving opportunities (Connick & Innes 2003; Innes & Booher 1999). Hence as Innes and Booher (1999) emphasise, there are three levels of potential CP outcome effects: i) the first order effects include the direct outcomes that will be immediately identifiable at the end of the planning process, such as high-quality agreements and innovative plans. These may also encompass social capital (trust and relationships), intellectual capital (mutual understanding) and political capital (ability to work together for common purpose) (Connick & Innes 2003); ii) the second order effects include the outcomes that will be apparent during the implementation stages (some time after the process has begun) (Bowling 2002) or that will be apparent once the process is underway but which are outside the project boundaries, such as coordination and joint learning extending into the communities and implementation of agreements; iii) the third order effects may not be evident until the initiative is completed, such as results on the ground (adaptation of regions, resources, and services), less destructive conflict and new institutions (Innes & Booher 1999). It is not necessary for every collaborative approach initiative that all these outcome effects are achieved. But the potential outcomes rely on many important factors such as the successful engagement process and the effectiveness of the stakeholders during these processes (Innes & Booher 1999). So developers and planners must be concerned with the engagement process, identifying who has a stake in the issues and their effectiveness during the planning process to promote agreed outcomes (Zaki et al. 2000).

2.2.2 Advantages and limitations of the collaborative approach

The proponents of CP consider that it is a valuable approach for resolving conflict and advancing shared visions for complex issues, such as ecotourism development (Gray 1989; Healey 2006; Kansas 2013). They cite several advantages of CP relative to other planning approaches including (Gunton, Day & Williams 2003):

1- Increased likelihood of successful plan implementation because of the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders during the planning process and explicit considerations of all stakeholder interests in the final agreements. This can lead to: a) supporting the plans and generating social, intellectual and political capital to follow up during the implementation stages; b) building stakeholders' sense of ownership and commitment towards the plan and their feeling of responsibility to implement the final outcomes (Kansas 2013; Morton 2009); c) avoiding pitfalls and the costs of resolving long-running conflicts caused by stakeholders ignorance about the planning process; and d) encouraging participants to find practical solutions to the issues during the implementation stage (Jarvis 2007).

2- Providing mechanisms for encouraging pluralist inputs and building consensus through the process of inclusiveness, communication, openness, trust and negotiations (Kim 2002). These mechanisms accommodate the diversity and interdependence of stakeholders and improve the quality of solutions being suggested based on collective capacities of stakeholders and a comprehensive analysis of the problem (Jarvis 2007).

3- Providing a flexible process which can be adjusted and is responsive to changes in local circumstances over time. Flexibility also exists in relation to the decision-making frameworks to be used reflecting variety of the participants (Innes & Booher 1999; Kim 2002).

4- Providing an opportunity to improve the stability and legitimacy of decision-making by advancing a shared solution designed to meet all stakeholder interests by

increasing confidence in the plan and promoting public acceptance for the outcomes (Kim 2002).

5- Improving stakeholder skills in dealing with planning issues (Lima 2008), both in the short term, by analysing data and information and constructing plans or visions, and in the long term, by building institutional capacity and enhancing working practices and knowledge (Kansas 2013). CP also enhances the expert skills in dealing with local circumstances.

However, CP also faces some challenges and it is crucial to both understand them and try to minimise their impacts in practice. Significant limitations include:

1- Initially it is a high-cost approach in terms of both time and resources. As a process, it takes a longer time and expends a lot of energy to build consensus, address the conflicts between stakeholders and advance shared visions, particularly when compared with other approaches (Araujo 2000).

2- It may be difficult to ensure that all the relevant stakeholders engage in the process. Some key actors may not want to participate as a result of a history of failed attempts to deal with the same issues, there may be ignorance of significant groups or individuals, or previous unmet promises may complicate the tasks of creating shared agreements (Kansas 2013).

3- The differences in stakeholder power influence the negotiation process in both overt and covert ways. The collaborative framework may also be impeded when there are powerful stakeholders, such as governmental agencies or others, who are viewed as not having a legitimate claim to participate in consensus arenas. These powerful stakeholders can shape the collaborative process and outcomes through domination of the other stakeholder groups (Jarvis 2007).

4- The collaborative planning outcomes may not be effective because the planning process has tried to take all stakeholder interests into account. Although CP is supposed to produce a ‘win-win’ situation for all, there are always ‘relative’ winners and losers as a result of the differences in stakeholder power (Kim 2002).

5- A great deal of education and training may be needed to ensure the most effective engagement. For local community members they may not have any basic technical knowledge or experience, and may need to understand some past practices in order to know what they will do during the process. Equally key agencies need to learn about situations to tailor the intervention more effectively and avoid the previous faults (Kansas 2013).

Overcoming these limitations during the collaborative application should increase the effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement and consequently final outcomes. Thus, in both building the idealised conceptual framework and proposing a more practical framework both the benefits and limitations of collaborative planning will be considered.

2.2.3 Collaborative planning process

Collaborative approaches have a number of constituent phases ranging from three (McCann (1983), Gray (1989), Jamal and Getz (1995b) and Gunton, Day and Williams (2003)) to five (Selin and Chavez (1995) and Bentrup (2001)). There are slight differences in some steps which are subsumed under the approach phases. A summary of chronological evolution of these approaches is provided in Table 2-3. There is general agreement that the process of collaboration is not a separated process but overlapping and dynamic iteration between them is considered a defining characteristic of all the approaches.

The collaborative approach of McCann (1983) has served as a significant conceptual foundation in the development of collaboration theory, although the term collaboration was not used. This approach includes three sequential phases for social problem solving (SPS) (Araujo 2000). The phases of the SPS approach are called problem setting (problem identity), direction setting (ends legitimacy) and structuring (functional viability). This approach was adapted by Gray in 1985 but this time she referred to the term collaboration. In 1989, Gray clearly identified the third phase as the implementation stage instead of the structuring stage and provided a range of key collaborative steps in each phase (Jarvis 2007). Selin and Chavez (1995) and Bentrup

(2001) developed a collaborative process designed to address natural resource management needs, which encompasses five phases. Two additional phases were added to the classical sequence of the three-phase approach discussed above. One, named 'antecedents', was added at the beginning to identify backgrounds and long-term preconditions that serve as the catalysts for CP. The second phase, labelled 'outcomes', was added at the end to underscore the outcomes and their sustainability by monitoring and evaluation (Araujo 2000; Barragan 2006).

This research will adopt the three-phase approach because the main issue in Egyptian development in general and ecotourism development in particular is how to engage stakeholders in the planning process in an effective way in order to make a plan that meets their interests and resolves their conflicts. Therefore, the three-phase approach will be sufficient to solve the engagement issues. As this issue can be addressed during the planning process, as detailed in Chapter One, there is no need to add the 'antecedents' phase, which focuses on the circumstances leading to collaboration. This precondition and the incentives for using the collaborative approach in planning are already known and some of these aspects have been discussed in the introductory chapter. Also, the 'outcomes' phase, which is concerned with evaluating the impact of the outcomes and ensuring compliance, is beyond the scope of this research. Furthermore, this three-phase approach, at this moment, is enough to try to mitigate the barriers and challenges that prevent effective stakeholder engagement in developing countries in general, and in Egypt in particular.

Table (2-3) Chronological evolution of the collaborative planning approach

McCann (1983) (social problem solving)	Gray (1989)	Waddock (1989)	Jamal & Getz (1995)	Selin & Chavez (1995)	Bentrup (2001)	Margerum (2002) and Gunton & Day (2003)
		Antecedents Mandate Existing network Third party organisation Common vision Crises Visionary leadership		**Antecedents** Crises Brokers Mandate Common vision Existing network Leadership Incentive	**Antecedents** Mandate Leadership Common vision Existing network Incentive Crises Lack of data Threat of regulations	
Problem setting Developmental phase Legitimises claims of stakeholders Current situation: is it desirable? Who is affected? What needs to be done to achieve the desired state? Stakeholders understanding of their role	**Problem setting** Common definition of the problem Commitment to collaborate Identification of stakeholders Legitimacy of stakeholders Convener characteristics Identification of resources	**Issues' Crystallisation** Identification and agreement of the problem Recognition of interdependence Relinquishing some autonomy Perceived benefits from engagement	**Problem setting** Define purpose and domain Identify convener Define problems to resolve Identify and legitimise stakeholders Build the commitment Balancing power differences Addressing stakeholder concerns Ensuring adequate resources for the collaboration to proceed	**Problem setting** Recognise interdependence Identify stakeholders Common problem definition Perceived benefits of stakeholders Perceived salience to stakeholders	**Problem setting** Identify and provide consensus on legitimate stakeholders Recognise interdependence Perceived benefits and salience to stakeholders Common problem definition Identify coordinator	**Pre-Negotiation** Identify relevant stakeholders Recruit stakeholder representatives Meet with stakeholders to conduct conflict assessment Form planning team Collect and compile all relevant information/data Draft Terms of Reference
Direction setting What is the more desirable state? What must be done to bring this about? Ends legitimacy – must be valued for society at large Policies, programmes and action must be perceived as accurate and feasible	**Direction setting** Establish ground rules Agenda setting Organising sub-groups Joint information search Exploring options Reaching agreement	**Direction setting** Define roles and goals Building consensus	**Direction setting** Collecting information Appreciating shared values Distributing the power among stakeholders Establish rules and agenda Organise sub-groups Discuss various options Select appropriate solutions Arrive at shared vision or plan through consensus	**Direction setting** Establish goals Set ground rules Joint information search Explore options Organise sub-groups	**Direction setting** Set ground rules Formalise relationship Establish goals Joint information search Organise sub-groups Explore options Reach agreement Establish baseline data.	**Negotiation** Identify stakeholder interests Agree on Terms of Reference Develop scenarios/options Resolve information/data gaps Evaluate scenarios Choose scenarios by consensus
Structuring Functional viability – how agreed-upon ends become institutionalised Who shall assume the functional responsibilities? What mechanisms must be created and managed to regulate relations?	**Implementation** Dealing with constituencies Building external support Structuring Monitoring the agreement and ensuring compliance	**Coalition building** Include relevant stakeholders Right level of authority and skill Ability to act Educate and inform about issues and values of partners	**Structuring** Discuss means of implementing and monitoring solutions Select suitable structure for institutionalising process Assign goals and tasks Monitor and ensure compliance with collaborative decisions	**Structuring** Formalising relationship Roles assigned Tasks elaborated Monitoring and control	**Implementation** Deal with constituencies. Roles assigned Task elaborated.	**Post-Negotiation** Complete plan document Get plan approval Complete administrative details necessary for implementation Implementation Evaluation and monitoring
				Outcomes Programmes, Impacts Benefits derived	**Monitoring/evaluation** Implementation/compliance /adaptive management	

Adapted from Jarvis (2007); Morton (2009)

Table (2-4) Operational process for this research

phases	Operational process for this research (based on the evolution approaches)	Revisiting the operational process for this research
Problem setting	- Defining the problem and purpose	Defining the problem and purpose
	- Identification of stakeholders - Legitimacy of stakeholders - Convener characteristics - ***Dealing with constituencies****	Building stakeholder network
	-Building commitment to collaborate - Stakeholders' understanding of their role	Identifying stakeholder roles and building commitment to collaborate
	- Identification of resources	Identification of resources
Direction setting	- Establish goals - Establish ground rules - Agenda setting - Organising sub-groups	Organising the procedures in terms of goals, ground rules, agenda setting, etc.
	- Joint information search - **Establishing baseline data ****	Joint information search and establishing baseline data
	- Exploring options - Reaching agreement and shared vision/plan/strategy - Select appropriate solution	Reaching agreement and shared vision/plan/strategy
	- Dispersion of power among stakeholders - ***Formalise relationship****	Distributing the power among the stakeholders
Implementation	-Building external support	Building external support
	-Selecting suitable structure for institutionalising process	Selecting suitable structure for institutionalising process
	- Implementing and monitoring the agreement and ensuring compliance -Assigning goals and tasks	Assigning goals and tasks to implement and monitor the agreement

Sources: The author based on Bentrup (2001); Jarvis (2007)
***** Action has been moved from implementation to another phase
****** Action had been added

By critically reviewing the three-phase approaches (see Table 2-3), it be the need to revisit the approach to make it more efficient and appropriate for application in developing countries becomes apparent. Following on from the results of both Bentrup (2001) and Jarvis (2007), the researcher re-grouped some steps within the phases, as Table (2-4) illustrates, to reflect more logical steps. For example, in the 'direction setting' phase, there is logic and strong linking between the steps (in the original approach) that are concerned with 'establishing ground rules', 'agenda setting' and 'organising sub-groups'. Hence, these steps may be more effective if grouped in one step dealing with organising the procedures of collaboration (Jarvis 2007). Furthermore, the step of 'dealing with constituencies' has been moved to the problem-

setting phase to bring forward the cooperation between the stakeholders and their parent agencies and build their support for the outcomes from the beginning of the process and attempt to improve their commitment to the final agreements. Similarly, formalising relationships was moved from the implementation phase to the direction-setting phase because this step was viewed as drawing up a contract between stakeholders to organise groups of stakeholders with specific responsibilities and helping to maintain a sense of shared direction among participants (Bentrup 2001). It could be more effective to enhance stakeholder commitment to implementation and acquire sources of funding if these relationships have been formalised before the implementation stage. Furthermore, the action of establishing baseline data has been added to direction setting to emphasise the need to have a solid database upon which the monitoring and evaluation programme can be built (Bentrup 2001).

Accordingly this research focuses on three phases of a collaborative planning approach:-

Problem setting: This phase is about identifying key stakeholders, developing a shared understanding of the issues and building commitment to work together to address these issues through face-to-face dialogue. The four main actions needed in this phase are: i) defining the problem and purpose of the collaborative effort by the stakeholders; ii) building a stakeholder network which encompasses stakeholder identification and determines the legitimacy of the stakeholders, which should be acknowledged and accepted by the other participants; iii) identifying stakeholder roles and building commitment to collaborate by raising awareness of interdependencies; and iv) identification of the availability of adequate resources to proceed with the collaboration events (Choi 2005; Jarvis 2007).

Direction setting: During this phase, the stakeholders explore the problem in depth, set up a shared solution and then agree on a collective course of action (Araujo & Bramwell 2002). In this phase, there are four main actions: i) organising the procedures by establishing the goals, agenda setting and ground rules as well as organising sub-groups to examine specific issues (Jarvis 2007) (particularly if there are a large number of issues to be discussed or a large number of stakeholders have to be involved for effective group functioning (Gray 1997)); ii) undertaking a joint

information search to consider the essential facts related to the issue and establishing baseline data for the monitoring and evaluation of the programme; iii) exploring various options of future solutions to reach a shared vision or plan through consensus building (Jamal & Getz 1995b); and iv) recognising power relationships and trying to distribute responsibilities between several stakeholders through formalising specific functions for specific groups (Choi 2005).

The structuring/implementation phase: This phase seeks to ensure that the agreements reached (during the second phase) are put into practice, and suitable institutional arrangements for implementation work (Araujo & Bramwell 2002). In this stage, legal forms of organising are instituted, roles assigned, and formal agreements reached to monitor and assure collective compliance with the goals of the collaboration (Selin & Chavez 1995). The necessary actions in this stage are: i) building external support for the implementation stage; ii) selecting a suitable structure for the institutionalisation process; and iii) assigning goals and tasks to implement and monitor the final agreements, and ensuring compliance with collaboration decisions (Jamal & Getz 1995a).

2.2.4 Critical factors for successful stakeholder collaboration

This part is designed to discuss different attempts to define the critical factors which facilitate a successful collaboration process.

Gray (1985) has suggested that diverse factors facilitate the success of the collaboration based on the sequential collaborative process, as follows:

There are five critical factors that facilitate successful outcomes from the problem-setting phase and set the preconditions for the next one:

- A wide spectrum of stakeholders should be identified to reflect the complexity of the problem domain because the more stakeholders who participate in solving the problem the more effective the collaboration will be;
- The stakeholders should believe that the most positive outcomes will be produced by collaboration. The efforts of the stakeholders will be enhanced when they expect the benefits of the collaboration will outweigh their individual efforts;
- Interdependence should be recognised by the stakeholders. It will be a key attribute of a successful stakeholder network during the collaboration process;
- The identified stakeholders should have legitimacy such as capacity and right to participate in the development process. In other words, exclusion of the legitimate stakeholders during the problem setting will harm the implementation of the agreement; and
- A successful convener should have legitimacy, authority and appreciative skills to convene the domain and the stakeholder network for mutual exchange and to allow the mutual exchange of ideas to build a shared vision

The critical factors which facilitate effectiveness of the direction-setting phase include:

- Coinciding beliefs and values among the stakeholders to facilitate the forming of agreement about the root of the problem and its solution; and
- Dispersion of power among the stakeholders to ensure that all stakeholders can influence the forming of the outcomes and direct their activities to mutually desirable ends.

The critical factors which facilitate effectiveness of the structuring phase include:

- Continued interdependence is necessary to influence the implementation of the direction-setting outcomes;
- External mandate should be coupled with other conditions like balanced power or recognition of interdependencies to facilitate structured regulation of the domain;
- An effective structure requires negotiation between stakeholders to reallocate power and responsibilities during the outcome implementation phase;
- Geographical proximity should be considered during the structuring to facilitate frequency of contact and enhance the interdependence of the stakeholders; and
- Successful implementation is dependent on the stakeholders' multilateral abilities to positively manage alterations in the environmental context.

A second group of researchers, pioneered by Selin and Chavez (1994), tried to identify the key factors of successful collaboration based on examining three successful cases of partnerships promoting sustainable tourism development. The factors were categorised into four groups: personal, interpersonal, organisational and operational. Choi (2005), during his studies about the barriers to effective collaboration between stakeholders in sustainable tourism in South Korea, merged the operational and organisational groups, and identified the critical components as:

Personal factors are concerned with the characteristics of individuals and organisations which facilitate collaboration through:

- A recognition of interdependence between individuals and organisations;
- A recognition of mutual benefits from the stakeholder collaboration to encourage them to collaborate and commit to the outcomes;
- Establishing clear objectives that reflect all the relevant stakeholder views to avoid conflicts between them during the process;
- Confidence in the possibilities that the final agreement will be implemented to ensure stakeholders constant commitment and support; and
- Recognising that legitimacy and authority for effective collaboration and mutual exchange between the stakeholders.

Interpersonal factors include:

- A mutual trust has been emphasised by many authors (Gray 1989; Selin & Chavez 1995). This enhances their tendency to be involved and brings about a more satisfactory use of resources and broadens the sense of ownership;
- Good communication among the stakeholders is necessary to exchange information and build trust, thus resolving conflict and advancing a shared vision;
- Efficient coordination techniques are necessary to avoid duplication of effort and mitigate conflicts between stakeholders;
- The presence of a legitimate and neutral convener is crucial to identify the relevant stakeholders and establish effective alliances.

Operational factors include:

- Institutional support, such as competent staff, is critical for successful management and persistence of the collaborative process;
- Inclusion of key stakeholders who have authority to make decisions is required for effective implementation, because they can mobilise important resources and minimise the resistance from outside the stakeholder network;
- Defining clear roles and responsibilities for the stakeholders is important to mitigate confusion and inefficiency. Furthermore, stakeholder performance can be more easily assessed; and
- Regular feedback is required in order to sustain the partnerships. Hence cyclical evaluation frameworks and monitoring systems need to be developed.

Further to the factors mentioned above, other critical factors have been identified by some authors, including:

- Problem framing, from a collective perspective, at the commencement of the process it is necessary to provide a shared and coherent understanding about the issues. This allows stakeholders to develop a common language for communicating during the collaborative process (Brooks, Neary & Asuquo 2007);
- Building relationships between the stakeholders is necessary to help build consensus and develop shared solutions. These relationships often start out weak

and become stronger during the process by '*open and frequent, formal and informal communication links*' (ACF 2010, p.27);

- Adequate and stable funding is crucial to effective collaboration because involvement activities are expensive and take a long time. These activities also need sufficient and skilled staff to facilitate their success.

In addition, Zaki et al. (2000) in their model for collaborative environmental planning divided the factors that facilitate successful collaboration into three categories. The first relates to the engagement issues such as the stakeholder engagement, developing the relationships amongst them, learning and capacity building. Zaki and his colleagues concluded from their empirical study that these engagement factors seemed to be most critical to the success of collaborative effort. The second category relates to the process issues encompassing shared goals and visions, effective leadership, organising and building partnership. These factors are concerned with the arrangements for stakeholder engagement. Finally, the outcome issues include factors concerning innovative solutions and how to follow up and monitor the outcomes of collaborative efforts.

Consequently, from the literature review and discussion of the critical factors for facilitating the effectiveness of stakeholder collaboration mentioned in the antecedent part, it can be emphasised that stakeholder engagement is the most critical issue for a successful collaborative planning approach. This is because the majority of these factors focus on stakeholder identification: widening stakeholders involved in the process; building the relationships between them; ensuring that their communications encourage listening, understanding, discussion and decision-making; and consideration of how the communications and relationships can be convened (Brooks, Neary & Asuquo 2007). Moreover, these factors are concerned with defining the stakeholder roles and responsibilities in the process, and how their confidence can be built, including regular follow-up for engagement actions to facilitate effectiveness in participation and collaboration.

On the other hand, the barriers and challenges to stakeholder engagement are no less important than the factors that facilitate success. These barriers should be understood and anticipated to try to mitigate them and ensure the success of the

collaborative planning process (the research will discuss the main barriers to the stakeholder engagement within the conceptual framework in the next chapter, section 3.2.4).

2.3 Conclusion

This chapter has critically reviewed the requirements of ecotourism development, and the potential of collaborative planning to address these requirements. The first part, which was concerned with the key fundamentals of ecotourism, concluded that ecotourism is a response to environmental degradation often associated with traditional tourism development forms. Ecotourism as an alternative approach is characterised by being small scale, locally controlled, moderately commercialised and complementary to the local environment. Furthermore, ecotourism development has been depicted as a system that includes organic interrelationships between three sub-systems: ecotourism services, natural and cultural resources, and local communities. Furthermore, a significant number of actors can affect, and are influenced by the ecotourism development. It is therefore very unlikely that a positive interrelationship between the system components can be achieved without the involvement of and collaboration between a wide range of relevant stakeholders during the planning process. Moreover, according to the requirements of successful ecotourism development, moving towards a dynamic and flexible process should take place in order to address the interdependences between stakeholders and the fragmented control over ecotourism destinations. This should help to harmonise the conflicts and advance shared solutions.

The second part of this chapter asserted that the CPA is one of the most appropriate approaches to address the requirements of ecotourism development. This is because CP is a collective process for resolving conflicts and advancing a shared vision involving a wide range of stakeholders working together through face-to-face communication. This approach is important due to increasing pressures on the environment and local communities; the state's shrinking abilities to solve social problems, and the blurring of boundaries between the public, private and community sectors, particularly at the local scale. The potential outcomes of CPA are not only tangible, such as agreed plans or strategies, but also intangible, like improving the

stakeholder relationships and the sense of ownership between the actors which increases their willingness to commit to final agreements. Collaborative approaches have a number of constituent phases ranging from three to five. This research has adopted the three-phase approach because it will be sufficient to solve the existing issues of stakeholder engagement. This approach was revisited to make it more efficient and appropriate for application in developing countries.

Finally, this chapter, through a discussion of the critical factors for facilitating successful stakeholder collaboration, argued that stakeholder engagement in the planning process is the most critical issue. This is because the majority of these factors focused on stakeholder identification: widening stakeholders involved in the process; building the relationships between them; defining the stakeholder roles and responsibilities in the process, how their confidence can be built and regularly followed-up for engagement actions, and the process and the outcomes to facilitate effectiveness in participation and collaboration. This conclusion is seen as the main base for developing an idealised conceptual framework for collaborative ecotourism planning, which will be explored in the next chapter.

Chapter Three: Developing the conceptual framework

Chapter Three

Developing the conceptual framework

This chapter aims to develop an idealised conceptual framework for collaborative ecotourism planning. This chapter is structured around two main parts: the first part (3.1) investigates the rationale of the conceptual framework; the second part (3.2) discusses, in detail, the components of a conceptual framework required for successful collaborative ecotourism planning. This will be used to evaluate the planning processes of the Egyptian ecotourism initiatives. This second part consists of four sections: 3.2.1 answers the question 'How can the stakeholder network be built during the process?'; section 3.2.2 discusses stakeholder engagement in the planning process and how can it be improved through the level of participation, including the procedures for motivating and preparing stakeholders to engage; 3.2.3 focuses on the evaluation procedures; and 3.2.4 defines the obstacles to the stakeholder involvement and collaboration during the planning process.

3.1 Rationale of the conceptual framework

According to the main conclusions from the previous chapter, identifying the relevant stakeholders and their engagement issues are the most critical factors facilitating success of the collaborative planning process. This can be measured by the degree of their involvement, their influence on the decision-making, and the development of a shared vision that reflects their interests. So there are three main questions that need to be considered within the collaborative process. Who should be involved? When should they be involved? How should they be involved? (Monjardin 2004). The first question is concerned with identifying who has an interest in, and is influenced by, the issues. Due to the widening range of stakeholders with an interest in complex issues such as ecotourism development, a network is one of the main means of ensuring continuous interactive communication and negotiations between the stakeholders. This can also facilitate mutual learning and development skills between the actors (Morton 2009). This network promotes and supports the building of bridges between the various stakeholders. By identifying and analysing the stakeholders during the network building phase experienced conveners can have a critical role in

managing the relations and building a consensus throughout the collaborative planning (CP) process (Jamal & Stronza 2009). It would be valuable, and easier, if the convener could utilise existing networks – whether social, inter-organisational or political networks[8] – when initiating the network (Margerum 2011). Network building needs to be utilised during the preliminary stages of a planning process to integrate all stakeholder interests and views in the plan. Furthermore the relationships between the stakeholders need to be strengthened during the process (Imran, Alam & Beaumont 2011).

The second question (when should they be involved?) is concerned with stakeholder involvement during the process and at which phase and level of involvement this should take place. This can be based on Arnstein's ladder of participation (Arnstein 1969). The stakeholders should be fully integrated throughout the planning process from informing level to decision-making, implementation and monitoring process (Monjardin 2004). Similarly, Arnstein (1969) emphasised that the stakeholders need to be empowered in decision-making and engaged towards the upper levels of her participation ladder in order to enhance their commitment to and implementation of these decisions. The stakeholders should be chosen to participate based on their influence and interest in order to reduce complexity and gain more control and efficiency in their roles during the process (Bryson 2004).

The question of how to involve the stakeholders is largely concerned with engagement techniques. Effective stakeholder engagement requires a combination of appropriate methods at each stage of the planning process for a pro-active exchange of information and views (Taschner & Fiedler 2009). These methods should be varied to motivate the specifically targeted stakeholders. Frequently used traditional methods may, for example, exclude people who feel uncomfortable in formal meetings (MDNR 2005). There is no single formula for selecting the methods in each stage. It depends on a number of criteria such as the desired objectives of the engagement and

[8] Social networks are defined by interpersonal relationships of the people through their work and community actions. Inter-organisational networks are defined by structure and process by which organisations can interact with each other. The links within these networks allow governmental and non-governmental organisations to coordinate their activities. Finally, the political networks are defined by power positions and configuration in the political system. They include elected officials and policy entrepreneurs (Margerum 2011).

the availability of the resources to undertake the engagement (Dukeshire & Thurlow 2002). The methods should also consider variation in the knowledge and background between the various stakeholder groups (Taschner & Fiedler 2009).

Furthermore, often due to past promises going unmet, and corruption within the controlling bureaucracy, stakeholders, particularly in developing countries, need further encouragement and motivation to become engaged with the process (Araujo 2000). Therefore, a successful CP process should be concerned with the appropriate motivation strategies for each stakeholder group, promoting and ensuring their continued participation throughout the whole process.

To ensure effective inputs into decision-making, it is unrealistic to expect the effective involvement of stakeholders who have, for a long time, been either excluded or marginalised from participation (Imran, Alam & Beaumont 2011). In this specific context, therefore, a further preparation stage is probably required to educate stakeholders about the key principles for ecotourism development and provide them with helpful information about how they can be engaged (Cameron & Johnson 2004). Furthermore, a preparation phase can be valuable in breaking the ice between stakeholders that have come from various agencies and different geographical areas (MDNR 2005; Preskill & Jones 2009).

The process and outcomes of CP need to be constantly evaluated to determine whether the stakeholder inputs have been successful in accomplishing the key objectives and, where necessary, systematically adjusted during the process to improve outcomes (Kelly, Essex & Glegg 2012). The idea behind combining outcome and process evaluation is that this is more likely to achieve effective implementation (Margerum 2011).

Furthermore, in addition to the components mentioned above, the constraining factors that hinder the engagement of the stakeholders during the process need to be identified, understood and then mitigated. It is impractical to be concerned with the factors that facilitate the success of the collaboration and yet ignore the barriers that prevent the collaborative process. Therefore, the barriers have been added to the conceptual framework to enhance the implementation of ecotourism plans.

Consequently, the conceptual framework used to evaluate ecotourism initiative comprises four main factors (Figure 3-1):

1- Stakeholder network building;

2- Stakeholder engagement during the planning process, which includes:

a- Stakeholder roles and their level of participation throughout the process;

b- Stakeholder involvement methods;

c- Stakeholder motivation for participation; and

d- Preparing the stakeholders for involvement in the process.

3- An evaluation of the process and the outcomes; and

4- An identification of the barriers to stakeholder involvement and collaboration.

These elements will be developed more fully in the next sections.

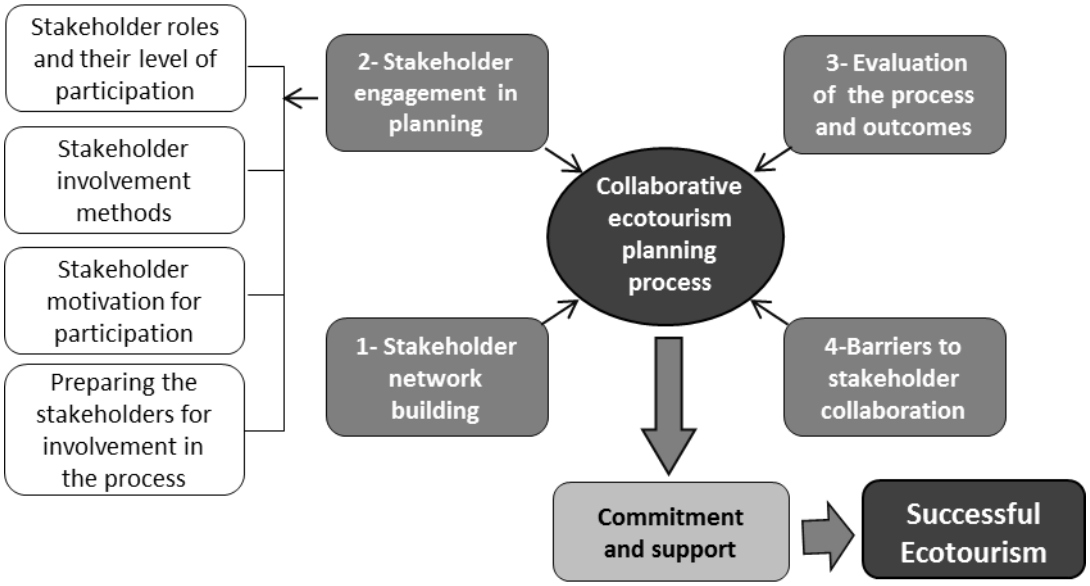


Figure (3-1) The conceptual framework
Source: The author

3.2 Stakeholder network building

The word 'networking' refers to the stakeholders (organisations and individuals) making connections with each other by going to meetings. These connections should become more formalised and maintained because of mutual interests between the stakeholders (Mandell 1999). The main characteristics of a successful stakeholder network are: i) interdependency between the actors; ii) interactions between stakeholders resulting in new patterns of relationships; iii) a new

institutional framework, as no single actor has a sufficient overview or steering capacity to provide the strategic solution to complex and dynamic problems such as ecotourism development (Klijn 1996 cited in Jarvis 2007); iv) being open to accept new internal and external stakeholders during, and after, the planning process; and v) sufficient flexibility to deal with positive and negative changes in circumstances (Markwell 2010).

The main objectives of building the stakeholder network can be identified as: i) the need to develop shared outcomes and facilitate the stakeholder acceptance and support for implementation; ii) a mandate to follow up and monitor the implementation of the final agreement, beyond the lifetime of the project; iii) an opportunity to promote face-to face dialogue and sharing of experience, knowledge and information between the stakeholders in order to build a consensus about the issues and advance shared solutions ; and iv) associating outreach activities and dissemination of the information about the initiative to non-participant stakeholders which should widen the external support of the final agreement (TROPOS 2012).

To build an effective stakeholder network there are two critical components (Figure 3-2), to be discussed in more detail in the next section. The first involves the conveners. They will be the cornerstone in building and managing the stakeholder network. The second component is the stakeholders themselves. How will they be identified and engaged in the network. This component will also investigate the relationships and interactions among and between the stakeholders, both inside and outside, the network.

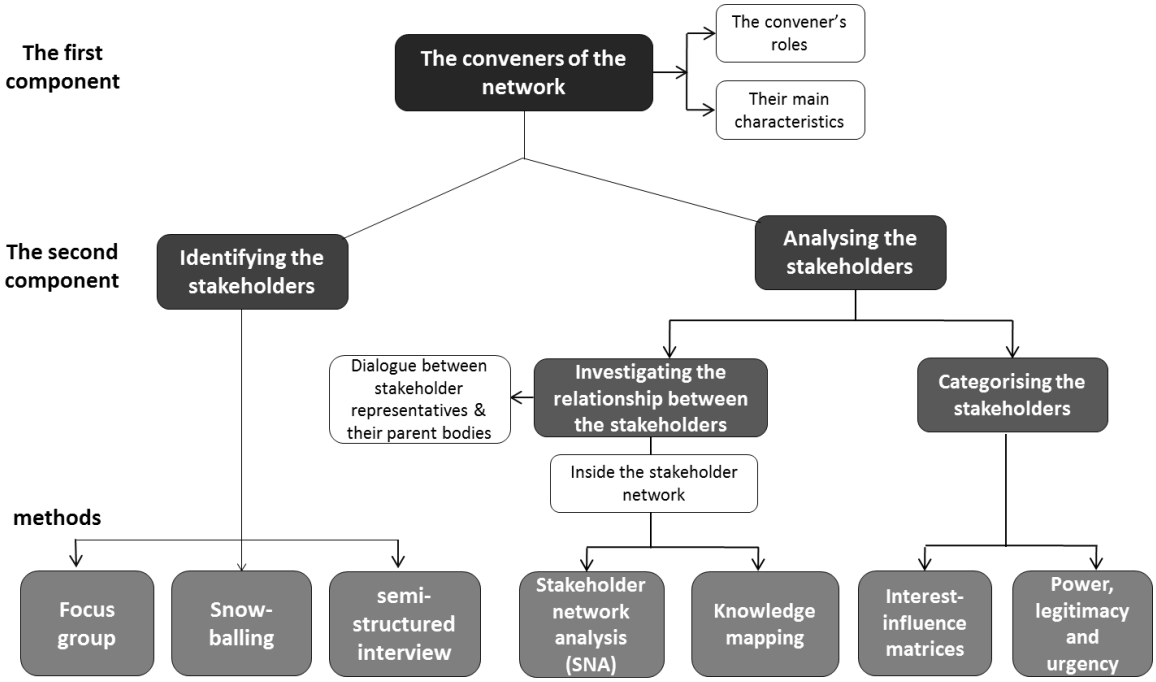


Figure (3-2) The steps in stakeholder network building
Source: The author

3.2.1 The conveners of the network

A convener can be a person, or a group, that convenes the stakeholder network, manages its relationships, facilitates the negotiation process and then spans any gaps between the stakeholders in order to try to build a consensus between them (Gepraegs 2008; Margerum 2011). Gray (1989) identified the convener as the cornerstone of the planning process, particularly within the problem-setting phase. The ideal convener composes a team that includes a number of the stakeholders serving as co-conveners. This helps to include or engage a wide range of stakeholders (Ramírez 1999). This team needs to have the power to choose the criteria for including (or excluding) a stakeholder from the network, and the authority to define the rationale of the stakeholder analysis. The convening team needs to have legitimacy from among the stakeholders in order to manage the domain and find the resources to support the process. The convener's power and legitimacy, as Gray (1989), Getz and Jamal (1994b) and Monjardin (2004) have emphasised, derives from the formal office (government), a longstanding reputation of trust between several stakeholders and their experience as an unbiased expert regarding the problem. According to Margerum

(2011) and others, the convener plays a variety of pivotal roles during the collaborative process. These include:

- Conducting an initial assessment before starting the collaboration process so that they are familiar with the issues and stakeholder concerns. They need to define the problem domain, the main potentials for the stakeholder collaboration, identify potential stakeholders and potential obstacles in involving them, which may include an initial appreciation of potential resources that will be needed for the process to proceed (Gepraegs 2008; Margerum 2011);
- They then need to bring all the relevant stakeholders to the table using appropriate methods to establish trust and a good relationship between them (Gray 1989);
- They need to secure the resources which cover the collaboration activities. These might include negotiation meetings, training, hiring support, and outreach activities to various constituencies and the public more generally;
- Facilitating the consensus-building process through balancing and accommodating difference between the stakeholders through a regulation of the negotiation process so that mutually agreed solutions can be found; and
- Ensuring that stakeholders commit to what they agreed to and translate these agreements into practice (Gepraegs 2008).

To accomplish these roles, the convener needs to have some critical attributes:

- The power and legitimacy to identify and involve the stakeholders in the collaborative process;
- The ability to listen to all stakeholder inputs. Indeed they should listen to the stakeholders more than speak themselves, giving sufficient room for the stakeholder inputs without interruption.
- Good time-management skills to schedule and manage the discussion between the stakeholders properly and adequately cover all meetings agenda items.
- Diplomacy and a tactful approach to manage any dominant stakeholders during the discussions to create a fair opportunity for participation and establish a respectful and non-judgmental environment (Gepraegs 2008);

- An ability to paraphrase and fairly interpret stakeholder views to help reach consensus about the issues and shared solutions (WEF 2000);
- Effective communications skills with all stakeholders both in and out of the meetings to create an atmosphere of mutual trust (Gepraegs 2008). During the meeting, two-way communication between the stakeholders and the conveners should take place in order to mitigate stakeholder fragmentation. Moreover, communication outside of the meetings is required to address any conflicts between the groups, to follow up the meeting outcomes, and extend the reach to other constituent groups and the public, to widen the external support for the final agreement. To accomplish this type of communication the conveners may need to appoint full-time coordinators from the stakeholders (Margerum 2011); and
- Maintain a balance between and neutrality with all stakeholders to create trust in the convener and the process. This is particularly important as there is commonly significant mistrust in the government of developing countries (Cameron, Smith & Johnson 2005). Indeed Gray (1989) has asserted that stakeholders may refuse to engage with the meetings and resist the whole collaborative process, if they suspect the conveners are biased. Therefore, an unbiased convener is a crucial factor to widen the stakeholder involvement and bring all the relevant parties together (Ramírez 1999).

3.2.2 Identifying and analysing the stakeholders

The second step in building a stakeholder network to identify and analyse relevant stakeholders. The main purpose of this step is to: i) clarify who has a stake in the issues, who can affect or be affected by the decisions, and who has information, knowledge and expertise about the issues. This step also allows for the identification of those who can support or obstruct the implementation of the outcomes (Taschner & Fiedler 2009); and ii) understand and analyse the relations between the different stakeholder groups. It is crucial to define these relations, whether based on cooperation or competition, in order to identify the methods required to build a consensus (Monjardin 2004).

According to the definition of a stakeholder used by Gray (1989) and Araujo (2000), there are a wide range of stakeholders, with varying interests and influence, that can be identified for ecotourism development. They may be individuals, groups or organisations. They include government agencies, private sectors, NGOs and communities. The stakeholders, based on the GIZ (2011) classification, may be internal stakeholders, which encompasses the relevant actors located inside the development boundaries, or external, which may include stakeholders from outside the development boundaries, such as national and international actors. Practically, it is impossible to involve all the stakeholders in ecotourism development during the planning activities or to treat all potential stakeholders as equals. Such an approach will be ineffectual and often conclude in stalemate with different stakeholders taking opposing positions (Currie, Seaton & Wesley 2009). Therefore, the identification of appropriate representatives is critical for the efficiency and effectiveness for all planning processes, including ecotourism (Taschner & Fiedler 2009). These representatives will be necessary to increase the legitimacy of the plans and minimise the resistance to their implementation (Choi 2005). However, defining who will be participants and who will be non-participants is not always straightforward. Some of the influential stakeholders to be included in the planning process can be identified using a variety of methods (WEF 2000). The next subsection will illustrate how internal and external stakeholders can be identified and analysed to build the network.

Identifying the stakeholders: It is important to correctly identify all different stakeholders and appropriate representatives to address stakeholder requirements during the process and within the final outcomes (Taschner & Fiedler 2009). Failure to identify either the stakeholders and/or their representative may lead to significant contributions being excluded from the planning process and then significant resistance may arise (Kelly et al. 2004). Some of the problems may include:

- Critical constraints and problems being overlooked or under-prioritised;
- Agreements reached not addressing the concerns and priorities of all the relevant stakeholders who are affected by the development;
- Ownership and support of the process, and subsequent decisions, could be lost if key stakeholders have not been identified; and

- Excluded stakeholders may resist or try to obstruct the project from being implemented.

Based on a review of the literature, including international examples of collaborative planning in practice, it cannot be emphasised enough that, in order to avoid the issues mentioned above and ensure successful identification of relevant stakeholders, the conveners should start, in the early stages of the process, to create a long list of potential stakeholders using a variety of techniques in an attempt to minimise bias and ensure a wide range of people concerned and interested in the development are involved (Currie, Seaton & Wesley 2009; Markwell 2010). Kelly and his colleagues (2004) acknowledged that there are generally six factors as to how relevant stakeholders can be identified:

- Proximity, which includes people who are living, working or spending time in or adjacent to the development areas;
- Economic, such as local business people or those who want to enhance their livelihood;
- Use which encompasses people who use or may use the area's resources or facilities;
- Social/environmental, which covers people's concerns with the social or environment impacts of the development;
- Values, such as people who have ethical, religious or political interests in the development or its effects and;
- Legal mandates, which includes organisations and people who are legally required to be involved.

Beyond this, there is no template for identifying these stakeholders at the pre-planning stage and it is dependent on the issues and the characteristics of local stakeholders (Currie, Seaton & Wesley 2009). However, some studies hint that it is essential to build a list that reflects all the relevant stakeholder groups. In order to do so, the convener needs to: i) compile and review existing information, previous plans and documents related to development in the region. This will draw a general picture about the potential stakeholders and understand their connection to the development plans (Gunton, Rutherford & Dickinson 2010); ii) identify key informants, who are

the most influential leaders or key people in each stakeholder group or those who are seen as leading players in the history of the conflict (both for and against the proposed development) (Monjardin 2004). In relation to the communities, they need to be mapped out to identify which members are knowledgeable about the local social fabric (Bramwell & Sharman 1999). Then the conveners should conduct semi-structured interviews with key informants or undertake focus groups to develop the initial stakeholder list, often using a snowballing technique to extend the network. Following this initial list of potential stakeholders, a content analysis needs to be utilised to finalise the list (Currie, Seaton & Wesley 2009); and iii) assemble a long list of actors who have been identified into a categorised list; i.e. individuals, government, organisations, etc., to ensure all the relevant interested groups can be included and facilitate discussion and analysis as part of the next phase (Albert, Gunton & Day 2003; GTZ 1988).

Stakeholder analysis: This step aims to categorise the potential stakeholders who have been identified, investigate the relationships between them to try and prioritise stakeholder involvement during the planning process by defining the appropriate roles, levels of participation and techniques of engagement for each stakeholder (Schmeer 2001). Stakeholder analysis is crucial to avoid participation gaps which exist if certain groups are underrepresented while others are overrepresented during the identification process. This may lead to an imbalance in stakeholder impacts on any plans compared to their actual role in society. Effective stakeholder analysis will help to achieve the balance not only in terms of quantity, where each group will be represented in a way that reflects its actual weight in the society, but also in terms of quality to avoid a specific group of stakeholders dominating events (Taschner & Fiedler 2009). A stakeholder analysis can be carried out using two sequential steps:

First, categorising the stakeholders: The literature offers several techniques that have been developed for this purpose, but most classify stakeholders into generic groups, for instance, into primary and secondary depending on whether they are directly, or indirectly affected by the development (GIZ 2011). However, Currie, Seaton and Wesley (2009) assert that a more precise typology of the stakeholders

based on the number of attributes and interests may be more effective in collaborative planning by leading to better agreements compared to using generic groups. Such an analytical categorisation method can be carried out by using the level of stakeholder interest and influence matrices[9] (Reed et al. 2009). These matrices classify the stakeholders into four groups based on their willingness to be involved in the planning process:

- Key players are the most critical stakeholders for any development. They must be fully engaged throughout the whole process because they have both high interest and influence;
- Context setters may be a significant risk for the development and should be monitored because they are highly influential but have low interest;
- Subjects have low influence but high interest. They will be supportive of the development and they should be kept informed and involved in discussions because they may become more influential by establishing alliances with other stakeholders; and
- Crowd, who have both low interest in and low influence over desired outcomes. A low priority is given to engaging with these groups (Bryson 2004; Reed et al. 2009).

Although these analytical techniques offer quick and useful ways for prioritising the stakeholder involvement, there are some limitations to their practical application that should be considered: i) often there is a lack of quantifiable measurement of the stakeholder attributes, as only whether an attribute is present or absent is checked (Currie, Seaton & Wesley 2009); ii) these techniques deal with stakeholder attributes as static, while their interventions in and interactions with, the issues are changeable over time. Therefore, in any collaborative planning process, including ecotourism development, the stakeholder analysis needs to be updated at every stage of a project's lifetime to match the dynamics of the stakeholder needs,

[9] These matrices have three popular forms: i) power-interest matrix to classify the stakeholders based on their level of authority and their level of concern with development or the outcomes; ii) power-influence for classifying based on the level of the power and level of their influence (active involvement) in the development; and iii) influence-impact matrix which is based on the their active involvement in the development and their abilities to effect changes to the development planning or implementation (impacts) (Rodriguez 2012).

interests and priorities; and iii) there might be a lack of required knowledge, skills and resources to proceed with the stakeholder analysis (Reed et al. 2009).

Secondly, investigating the stakeholder interrelationships by analysing and understanding the stakeholder interactions within the network and the relative power and responsibilities of the stakeholder representatives and their respective parent bodies is one of the most important pillars for building and strengthening the partnership, to improve collaboration in the making and implementing plans. So, a relationship analysis needs to be conducted when building a stakeholder network in order to understand the interdependencies and the levels of interactive communication between the stakeholders. Such an analysis will help to provide useful information describing the existing form and quality of the relations between each stakeholder (whether conflicting, complementary or cooperating, or formal or informal) (GIZ 2011; Renard 2004). It may also clarify the main reasons for any interruptions, tensions or damages to these relations, thereby helping the convener promote relationships during the process.

There are two main methods to analyse stakeholder relationships: i) Social Network Analysis (SNA), which uses matrices to organise relationship data with regard to the presence or absence of ties (both negative and positive) and their strength. It uses a quantitative form to record this information so it can be summarised and analysed easily. SNA exposes the structure of the stakeholder network through identifying the focal node and marginal actors and defining the different stakeholder clusters, including how these clusters have been built. SNA can therefore be important to ensure that key stakeholders are involved and identify any conflict between different stakeholder groups; and ii) Knowledge Mapping (KM), which is a more flexible approach to enhance the communication and facilitate the learning between the stakeholder groups when used in conjunction with SNA. It maps out and evaluates the knowledge systems and exchange information mechanisms in order to widen them to include less knowledgeable stakeholders, thereby fostering effective collaboration and social learning (Reed et al. 2009).

Dialogue between stakeholder representatives (SRs) and their constituencies (respective parent bodies) are also critical in enhancing the parent body's support and

commitment to any final agreement. Gray (1989) suggested that this ideally takes place during the implementation stage. However, based on the international examples of collaborative planning (such as Brazil, Peru, Nepal and Zambia), mutual dialogue between SRs and their parent bodies should take place throughout the whole planning and implementation process. This keeps the parent bodies informed and understanding of the rationale for the trade-offs made and then they can share in the construction of the solutions that meet the needs of all relevant stakeholders (Araujo & Bramwell 2002; Cluck 1997). So this research proposes that the mutual dialogue needs to start at the same time as the stakeholder network building and the convener should continuously monitor these dialogues. Moreover, such dialogue provides a good opportunity to widen the support and the ownership of the stakeholders to the outcomes. It is important to prevent any surprises and dissatisfaction from the general public (Bentrup 2001). Dialogue should also improve the performance of representatives because they are usually expected to be accountable to their parent bodies during the planning process and ensure that their requirements are reflected in the outcomes (Araujo & Bramwell 2002). A rich body of literature such as Araujo (2000) and Healey (2006) offers some advice on good techniques for building an effective dialogue between SRs and their parent bodies. These include establishing consultation seminars to explore and discuss the outcomes of each phase of the process and getting feedback so that representative contributions to further activities can be better informed. Moreover, there should be regular reports about the process to keep the all parent bodies informed. Finally, the conveners should occasionally try to establish informal arenas with the main parent bodies, to ensure these bodies are informed and accept the outputs of the process.

Synthesis

The stakeholder network is the cornerstone to the success of collaborative planning because it is the most appropriate mode to facilitate effective negotiation between stakeholders and promote mutual learning. The legitimate convener has a critical role in building the stakeholder network, managing relations and building consensus through the collaborative planning process. Identifying and analysing the stakeholders is the first key step to network building. The main purposes of this step

are clarifying who should be involved in the network, and understanding and analysing the relations between the stakeholder groups inside the network and outside with their parent bodies, which helps to define the stakeholder roles and most suitable methods of involvement.

Consequently, the research will investigate stakeholder network building during Egyptian initiatives of ecotourism development planning based on the following questions:

- How have the conveners been identified? What are their critical characteristics?
- How have stakeholders been identified and analysed in Egyptian ecotourism initiatives? What procedures have been used to build the stakeholder network?
- What dialogue is there between stakeholder representatives and their parent bodies?
- What factors influence the efficiency of stakeholder networks in ecotourism planning in Egypt?

3.3 The stakeholder engagement in planning

Stakeholder engagement is one of the most significant ingredients in a successful planning process for ecotourism development. This section will discuss stakeholder engagement around four components (Figure 3-1): i) stakeholder roles and their level of participation throughout the planning process; ii) stakeholder involvement methods; iii) stakeholder motivation for participation; and iv) preparing the stakeholders for involvement in the process.

3.3.1 Stakeholder roles and their level of participation throughout the planning process

Stakeholder participation in ecotourism development planning is not just at one level. Different gradations of participation can be beneficial at different stages because each stage of the planning process requires different commitments and obligations. These different levels of engagement build on each other and they are not mutually exclusive of each other (Drafting Group 2002). Knowing these gradations helps the conveners to understand how stakeholder participation can evolve during the process

in order to maximise the benefits from each stakeholder because all stakeholder groups cannot be involved in the whole process at the same time in the same way (Gray 1989; Maguire, Potts & Fletcher 2012). The appropriate level of participation depends upon stakeholder identity including their interest, power and capacity, etc. (Arnstein 1969; Imran, Alam & Beaumont 2011), and the timing of participation activities, the stage of the planning process, available resources, and the benefits of participation (Drafting Group 2002).

Discussion of the levels of participation will be based mainly on Arnstein's Ladder[10] of Citizen Participation which is the seminal and main source in this aspect. Her ladder comprises eight categories (Table 3-1). Each rung reflects the level of stakeholder influences in determining planning outcomes. The lower rungs of the ladder are manipulation and therapy, which does not reflect any genuine attempt at participation but rather the decision-makers' sole aim is to educate the participants (Friedman & Miles 2006). The participants do not have any influence on the final outcomes.

With regard to the middle section of the ladder, tokenism, three rungs are identified. First, informing the stakeholders about the planning activities, their responsibilities, and the options. This is a one-way flow from the decision-makers or working group to the stakeholders without any channel for feedback or negotiation (Arnstein 1969). However, it can easily be transferred to a two-way process, from the stakeholder to the decision-makers, perhaps to rectify or complete the missing data, and include stakeholder comments in the final agreements. The most frequent techniques used in informing the stakeholders and receiving their feedback are factsheets, newsletters, leaflets, exhibitions and media, etc. (Taschner & Fiedler 2009; Wilcox 2004). Secondly, consultation was defined by Arnstein (1969) as the stakeholders being invited by the competent authorities to discuss and present their opinions without any commitment from the official side to incorporate these views in the outcomes. However, it can be a good opportunity to learn from stakeholder

[10] All the literature that discusses the participation levels has been based on Arnstein's Ladder. So the research in this section will depend upon her Ladder, focusing on both the top and middle sections. The middle reflects the participation situation in the majority of developing countries, and the higher rungs represent the target levels of participation which may increase the likelihood of the plan being implemented.

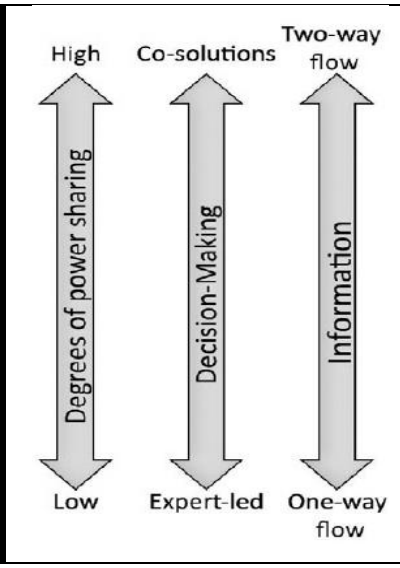
perceptions, experience and ideas and then to develop the solutions or plans that are presented during the consultation events (Drafting Group 2002). The consultation benefits can be maximised and the stakeholder participation widened through: i) exploring specific optional scenarios, plans or visions and asking the stakeholders for feedback. However, the consultation may not be suitable to develop the ideas or put plans in actions (Wilcox 2004); ii) conducting the consultation during the preparation of plans as well as once they are completed; iii) combining consultation with other participation levels to ensure all the stakeholder views are presented; iv) by providing feedback to the consultation participants about their views and comments to try to build trust with the final agreements. The consultation with stakeholders can also be conducted through written methods such as online or off-line questionnaires to solicit their inputs. Active oral consultation where the stakeholders have the opportunity to discuss with the competent authority during focus groups, workshops or conferences can also be conducted (Drafting Group 2002; Wilcox 2004). Thirdly, placation[11] is where the stakeholder begins to have some degree of influence although power still resides with the competent authorities. Here a few stakeholders may be able to provide advice or suggestions but the decision-makers still make the final decision (Arnstein 1969).

At the higher rungs of the ladder stakeholders are not only active participants in the planning process but also become partly responsible for the outcomes (Drafting Group 2002). The higher section consists of three rungs. First, with Partnership the power between the decision-maker and the stakeholders will be redistributed through structures such as joint planning committees or boards for co-producing adequate solutions and committing themselves to implementing them (Taschner & Fiedler 2009). The ground rules will be established after negotiations between the stakeholders and the key decision-makers about shared responsibilities for planning and decision-making processes. This partnership can work most effectively when the stakeholders have an organised power-base which has financial resources to pay

[11] Edelenbos and Monnikhof (2001) proposed a ladder based on Arnstein's which consisted of only five rungs after omitting the first two rungs and changing the title of some of the others, as follows: 1) Informing; 2) Consultation; 3) Advice (Placation in Arnstein's ladder); 4 Co-produce (Partnership); 5 Co-decide (Delegated Power and Stakeholder Control) (Taschner & Fiedler 2009).

compensation to its leaders for their efforts and time during the process and ensure that these leaders are accountable to the organisation they represent.

Table (3-1) Different levels of participation

Level of participation	Arnstein Participation Ladder		The level of influence
Degree of stakeholder power	Stakeholder control		Forming or agreeing decisions
	Delegation power		
	Partnership		
Degree of tokenism	Placation		Being heard before decision
	Consultation		
	Informing		
Non-participation	Therapy		Knowledge about decision
	Manipulation		

Source: Adapted from Arnstein (1969), Taschner and Fieldler (2009) and Tseng and Penning-Rowsell (2012)

Finally, with both Delegated Power and Stakeholder Control stakeholders have a high influence in decision-making through being the dominant authorities in the planning process and decision-making, and being accountable for the performance of plan implementation. At these levels the bargaining processes are used to resolve the conflict between stakeholders and decision-makers rather than one side, or the other 'winning' due to the power or pressure they have exerted (Arnstein 1969).

In conclusion, Arnstein's ladder provides a valuable framework for understanding the characteristics and the main purposes of different participation levels. It can be used to evaluate the participation levels of the different stakeholder groups during the planning process and hopefully enhance their involvement and commitment at each stage (Friedman & Miles 2006). Nevertheless, the backbone to all the different levels of participation is communication, and the transfer of information must be a two-way process – between the stakeholders and the competent authority (Drafting Group 2002).

Furthermore, the second important point related to the different levels of the participation is ensuring that the respective roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder are clearly defined to avoid confusion and inefficiency within the planning process (Malena 2004). Defining the roles of each stakeholder group should take place in advance, designed in such a way to fulfil specific positions during the project and give stakeholders a sense of duty. The convener needs to set preconditions (Terms Of Reference) for each stakeholder group to organise their involvement and increase their motivation (Choi 2005). Furthermore, practitioners recommend that the stakeholder roles and responsibilities need to be commonly agreed and commensurate with their characteristics and experiences. This should ensure that the right stakeholders are in the right position to engage with the process. They also recommend the development of guidelines to assist participants to commit to their roles during the planning and implementation process (GIZ 2011; Malena 2004)

Synthesis

Defining the participation level of each stakeholder as well as their respective role and responsibilities is critical to ensure their effective commitment during the planning and implementation process. These roles should be tailored to stakeholder characteristics, available resources and the planning stage to avoid confusion and inefficiencies with stakeholder participation.

Consequently, the research will investigate the participation levels of the stakeholder at each stage of the Egyptian ecotourism initiatives based around the following questions:

- Which form of participation was used throughout the planning process?
- What were stakeholder roles during these stages?
- Were all stakeholders involved in the whole planning process?

3.3.2 Stakeholder involvement methods

There is a wide spectrum of involvement methods that can be used during the ecotourism development planning process, ranging from informing and educating to innovative methods for interaction and decision-making. Selecting the most appropriate techniques for engagement at each stage is crucial for a more pro-active exchange of information and views, which should then lead to better-harmonised outcomes (Marien & Pizam 1997). Using inappropriate techniques not only leads to poor outcomes but may, in some circumstances, obstruct the initiative as a whole (Cascettaa & Pagliaraa 2013). There is no single method that can cover all collaborative planning requirements, and consideration of the variation in stakeholder knowledge and background about the issues (Araujo 2000) needs to be taken into account when choosing the most appropriate approach (Taschner & Fiedler 2009). Three types of benefit from using proper and varied methods for deliberation during the collaborative activities have been identified: i) substantive effects, which include more acceptable decision outcomes from the technical, environmental, economic and social points of view; ii) procedural effects, which include better management of the conflicts, using the information and increasing the legitimacy of the plan-making process; and iii) contextual effects, which include better information exchange, increasing the trust in the institutional stakeholders, and strengthening the democratic practices (OECD 2004). To achieve all these benefits the methods of involvement should be both varied and appropriate during every stage of the process. So this section discusses the types of engagement method, the main criteria used to choose the proper methods and, finally, some consideration of the most effective engagement methods to be used during a collaborative planning process.

Categories of engagement methods: To choose the appropriate method for each planning stage, the different categories of methods need to be identified. From the literature review it can be emphasised that the methods that assist in ecotourism planning can be placed into two main groups (Table 3-2). The first group includes administrative-oriented methods that aim to increase the likelihood of the stakeholder cooperation with official organisations through exchange of information, education and support-building techniques. These methods meet the government needs of

stakeholder participation within ecotourism development. The most widely used administration-oriented methods are information exchange (giving and gathering) and interactive engagement. The second group are stakeholder-oriented methods, which provide stakeholders with the power to influence decision-making and increase the government's response to stakeholder views, values and inputs. These methods provide more for a direct involvement of the stakeholders, recognising their needs taking an active part within the ecotourism planning process. Within this group a further two sub-groups can be identified: decision-making supplements and representational input. The convener needs to strike a balance between administrative- and stakeholder-oriented techniques to increase the effectiveness of stakeholder participation (Araujo 2000; Marien & Pizam 1997).

Choosing the proper engagement methods: Due to the uniqueness of each ecotourism development planning issue, the involvement techniques and strategies used should also be individually tailored to the project. Therefore, generic criteria to help the conveners design involvement programmes can be suggested (Marien & Pizam 1997; OECD 2004):

- The purpose of the engagement: The convener and planning team should focus initially on defining what exactly they want to achieve by engaging with stakeholders. They should also think about the expected results from the engagement activities, which will help to select the best techniques for realising these expectations (Kelly et al. 2004).
- The level of involvement: Each level of participation requires a specific level of information exchange and interaction between the stakeholders (informing, consultation or active involvement). For instance, the powerful techniques to engage selected groups – such as focus groups which provide each stakeholder with enough room to speak and discuss issues – are not suitable for the consultation process, which offers the stakeholder limited options and may require engagement with large groups of stakeholders to build external support for the plan (Wilcox 2004).

Table (3-2) Categorising the methods[12] of stakeholder involvement in collaborative ecotourism planning

	Administrative-orientated methods	Stakeholder-oriented methods
Information exchange (giving and gathering)	**a) Printed public information materials** i) Letters; ii) Posters, notices and signs; iii) Leaflet and brochure; iv) Fact sheet; v) Newsletter; and vi) technical report **b) Telephone and Broadcasting** i) Telephone techniques; and ii) Local radio and television shows **c) Surveying individuals** i) Questionnaire surveys; and ii) Key person interviews **d) Internet** i) Internet techniques; and ii) Web-based forums	
Interactive engagement	**a) Information events** i) Exhibition; ii) Information centre (Drop-in centres); iii) Information session and briefing; and iv) Public hearing/meetings; **b) Engaging selected stakeholder groups** i) Community visits and study tours; ii) Focus group; iii) Workshop; and iv) Technical working party **c) Engaging large groups** i) Stakeholder conference; ii) Visioning event; iii) Weekend event; iv) Planning for Real; and v) Open space event **d) Education and support building** i) Advisory groups and task forces; ii) Technical and professional advice; iii) Workshops and seminars; v) Expert panels; and vi) Formal and professional training	**a) Decision-making supplements** - Direct confrontation - Litigation - Role playing and game playing **b) Representational input** **i) Active process** - Votes, referendums and plebiscites - Partnership - Delegated power - Stakeholder control **ii) Passive process** - Nominal group technique (NGT) - Delphi process - Citizen juries - Planning charrettes

Source: The author based on Araujo (2000), Kelly et al. (2004), and Marien and Pizam (1997)

- Who is being engaged: Stakeholder knowledge and background about the issues as well as their capacity and level of literacy are important factors to

[12] The methods in this research cover three main headings: i) techniques that have frequently been used in short-term involvement employed by planners or conveners. These techniques range from simple communication materials and sessions to more complex methods of decision-making; ii) structures including interim or longer-term organisational structures used during collaborative processes. They range from technical and advisory committees to partnership organisations; and iii) longer-term programmes or strategies that involve stakeholders devoted partly or wholly to the programme as well as using techniques and structures (Wilcox 2004).

consider in selecting the proper techniques to engage different stakeholders. Therefore, the results of the stakeholder analysis (undertaken during building the network stage) needs to be translated to a sequence of concrete inputs in selecting appropriate techniques at each stage of the process (Margerum 2011).

- The scope of previous participation programmes in that locality: Understanding and analysing the previous participation attempts will help to identify the barriers and opportunities in order to maximise the benefits of the new programme and choose the most appropriate techniques based on these experiences (Marien & Pizam 1997).
- Available time frame: The time frame for making a plan is an important ingredient in choosing appropriate engagement methods. Each technique needs a different time for preparing, inviting the target stakeholders and analysing the results (Kelly et al. 2004).
- Resource availability: Choosing the technique also depends on the financial resources and skills of those involved. For example, the techniques during the consultation stages require experienced facilitators compared with an informing stage. Also, techniques to engage with large groups of stakeholders need more financial resources compared with engaging smaller, selected groups.
- The statutory requirement: The conveners should consider any statutory requirements in selecting the engagement techniques. For example, the required time to report on the progress of the process to the stakeholders (Drafting Group 2002).

General matrix of the proper involvement methods for collaborative phases: By combing both administrative and stakeholder-oriented methods it is possible to create a general matrix of different types of engagement strategy for different stages in the process (see Table 3-3).

Table (3-3) Categorising the techniques according to the collaborative phases

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Phase of collaborative planning</th><th>Administrative-orientated methods</th><th>Stakeholder-oriented methods</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">Problem setting</td><td colspan="2">Defining the problem scope and purpose</td><td>Printed public information materials
Telephone and broadcasting
Internet
Information events</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Building stakeholders' network</td><td>Identify the stakeholders</td><td>Public meeting to map out the communities
Interview with key informants
Focus group to establish the stakeholder list</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Analyse the stakeholders</td><td>Interview and survey to gather the stakeholders' characteristics then focus group/workshop to analyse the stakeholders</td><td>Delphi method</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Diagnostic of the current situation</td><td>Public meeting then selected groups' techniques</td><td>Nominal group technical/Delphi method</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">Direction setting</td><td colspan="2">Develop plan options</td><td>Techniques used to involve selected groups</td><td>Partnership/nominal group technical</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Public consultation on draft development plan</td><td>Techniques used to involve large groups</td><td>Referendum/voting</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Reaching shared plan</td><td>Techniques used to involve selected groups</td><td>Citizen juries/planning charrettes</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="2">Implementation</td><td colspan="2">Selecting suitable structure for institutionalising process</td><td rowspan="2">Techniques used to involve selected groups</td><td rowspan="2">Planning charrettes/ nominal group technical</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Assign goals and tasks to implement and monitor the agreement</td></tr>
</table>

Source: The author based on Cascettaa and Pagliaraa (2013); and Maguire, Potts and Fletcher (2012)

Considerations for facilitating effective engagement meetings: There are five key aspects for preparing and conducting effective participation events. These are combined in the S.T.E.P.S. approach as follows:

- **S**pace: The location of the meeting space and its physical arrangement, including the availability of essential equipment, are significant for setting the mood for the participants and influencing their performance during the meetings.
- **T**ime: Proper scheduling and time management are essential for a successful meeting. This ensures enough time for stakeholders to have their input and allow different agenda items which might be locally important to be discussed.

Scheduling is important to help the majority of the different stakeholder groups, particularly local communities, participate in the meetings (MDNR 2005).

- **E**ventfulness: To enhance the stakeholder performance during the meetings, the facilitators should use ice-breaking exercises and humour.
- **P**roduct: Good preparation of the meeting in advance through developing understandable information for all different stakeholder groups is important and this might include asking participants about their expectations of the meeting (MDNR 2005). Following up meeting outcomes through sending participants minutes to review before the next steps will be also crucial in taking the agenda forward (Drafting Group 2002).
- **S**tyle of the facilitators and their roles can strongly influence the outcomes of the process. Experienced facilitators adapt their style according to the nature of the issues and the type of participants. They use their expertise to ensure the group functions in a logical and transparent manner, accepting and respecting different stakeholders in order to try to build a consensus between them. They often try to break the large meetings into small groups to enrich the discussion and allow all the participants to have their say (OESU 2001).

Synthesis

Choosing the appropriate involvement methods at each stage of the process is important for effective stakeholder participation. The methods need to be varied, and a combination of administrative- and stakeholder-oriented methods to attract the different stakeholder types and enhance their performance during the meetings will be required.

Consequently, this research will examine the appropriateness of various stakeholder engagement methods in Egyptian ecotourism initiatives based around the following questions:

- Which methods of stakeholder involvement have been chosen at each stage of the planning process? Were they appropriate or not?
- Could stakeholder involvement have been enhanced during these engagements?

3.3.3 Stakeholder motivation for participation

Motivating the stakeholders to effectively participate in development planning has become one of the most crucial factors in facilitating success, particularly in developing countries. This was because stakeholders generally have not had any interest in being involved in the planning process for many reasons, including past promises going unmet and corruption within the controlling bureaucracy (Araujo 2000). These motivations may be tangible or intangible rewards utilising formal or informal mechanisms, with each group of stakeholders (and/or their representatives) being motivated in different ways. The conveners need to choose the appropriate incentives and time for motivating each group or individual to first obtain and then maintain their active participation throughout the planning process (Adhikari 2012). The next section will discuss the different types of motivation and their appropriateness for each group of stakeholders and, finally, an incentive programme during the development planning will be developed.

Using motivational techniques are in trying to elicit support from apparently uninterested and apathetic stakeholders. It can boost their morale to be involved and stay involved throughout the development planning process. Motivational techniques are also important for boosting confidence and pride in enhancing individual or group performance and productivity. Furthermore, incentives may help in overcoming the temporary obstacles that disrupt the planning activities and prevent stakeholder participation and commitment (Tang 2005). The motivations for stakeholders to participate in development planning can be classified into three main types:

i) Purpose-driven incentives are intangible rewards to enhance intrinsic motivations that can be offered by the planner through the identification of the project opportunities from the perspective of each stakeholder group. These incentives can be delivered by public awareness raising and educational activities including workshops to define the value and implications of the project for the public. These activities should be at a preliminary stage before project planning commencement. Activities may be repeated during the planning process to motivate the stakeholders to stay involved. Furthermore, Prestby et al. (1990) considered the purpose-driven motives to be the primary means of initiating participation through an understanding of how any

particular project can fulfil stakeholders personal goals, why their involvement will be critical during the process, as well as developing an understanding of their responsibilities (Clark & Wilson 1961; Tang 2005).

ii) Social incentives (also called solidarity incentives) are intangible and intrinsic rewards that provide the opportunity to gain social prestige and access to social activities (Adhikari 2012). These activities aim to create a sense of familiarity and to strengthen the relationships between the stakeholders and provide the prestige and recognition bestowed upon the community leaders and key persons from an involvement in such activities. These individuals can then encourage others to participate, because the people always respect and endorse the actions of their leaders and peers (Fischhoff 2012). Although the social incentive activities are always delivered openly and publicly, the private and personal expressions of respect such as formal invitations to attend the meetings and special thank you letters should not be neglected (Tang 2005).

iii) Material incentives refer to tangible rewards which can be translated into monetary values or provision of services. These incentives are in effective short-term solutions to overcome immediate obstacles like compensating the participation costs (transportation and meetings time) (Prestby et al. 1990). The material incentives can be divided into direct and indirect incentives, as Figure 3-3 shows. Direct incentives can include cash, such as wages for full-time participants, as compensation for attendance at meetings. The second type of direct incentives is in kind, like providing a database of ecotourism resources, tour operator tools and camping equipment. Indirect incentives can include: fiscal benefits, such as tax exemptions, tax reimbursement or deductions and land tenure security; the provision of services such as enhanced infrastructure and services to poor communities, technical assistance and the marketing of the ecotourism resources to enhance development; and social benefits, such as the provision of social facilities and establishment of community organisations to sustain the ecotourism development (Lanly 1986).

Furthermore, the motivational techniques used during the development planning should be mixed to meet different individuals and group needs and expectations according to the level and stage of participation. The choice should be

based on the characteristics of each stakeholder group. For instance, material incentives may be appropriate for the public to mitigate their barriers to getting involved, such as travelling costs. However, the leaders of the local communities may require social incentives to provide them with privilege and prestige. Furthermore, motivations for the private sector to offer effective involvement may require purpose-driven incentives and indirect material incentives such as tax exemption. Therefore, the conveners and planners need to design an incentive programme before the commencement of the planning process to identify and select appropriate incentives for each stakeholder group.

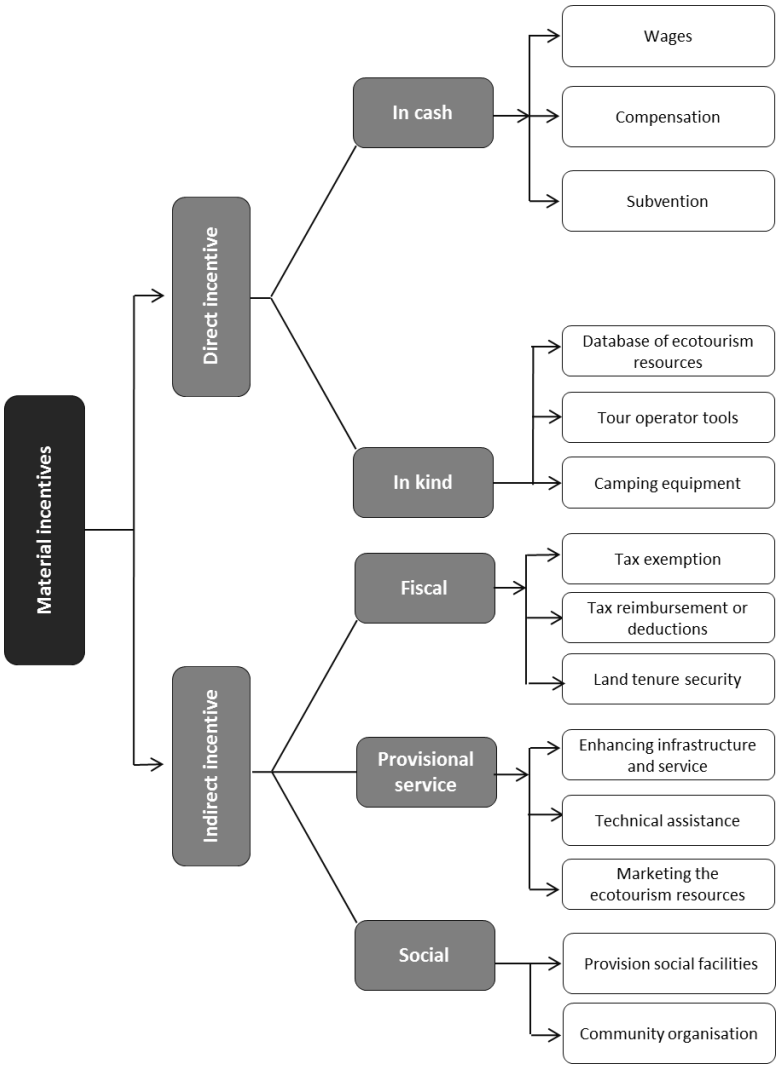


Figure (3-3) The material incentives
Source: The author based on Lanly (1986)

According to many, including Clark and Wilson (1961); and Tang (2005), there are five quick steps to build this incentive programme: i) assigning a big enough

proportion of the initiative's budget for incentive activities. It is important to set aside money in advance to cover all activities of the incentive programme to promote stakeholder participation; ii) identifying and consulting the beneficiaries to ensure appropriate incentives for each group will be applied; iii) choosing a variety of incentive activities to meet the requirements of different individuals within each group to ensure that as many stakeholders as possible are included in these activities; iv) setting up a programme of incentive activities which defines potential activities for each stakeholder group during the planning process and identifying the resources needed cover these activities, whether from the initiative's budget or external sponsors; and v) regularly monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of this programme to identify any reduction in motivation and performance of each activity and try to address it at the next stage.

In conclusion, sufficient incentive activities for different individuals and groups of stakeholders are important for overcoming any barriers that may prevent active participation. To be more specific, all the relevant stakeholders in developing countries need to be motivated before and during the planning process using appropriate rewards based on their specific characteristics and different levels of participation.

Investigating the appropriateness of incentive activities for different stakeholder groups and different participation levels, this research will seek to answer the following questions:

- What mechanisms were used to motivate each stakeholder group to participate and remain in the planning process? Were they appropriate for each group or not?
- Were sufficient resources to cover costs of the incentive activities for the different stakeholder groups allocated?

3.3.4 Preparing the stakeholders for involvement in the planning process

The preparation activities designed to involve stakeholders is critical to ensure the effective participation of the most relevant stakeholders. These preparation activities not only need to be in the preliminary stage of the planning process to provide the stakeholders with helpful information about the why, when, where and how of their engagement (Cameron & Johnson 2004), but also should be continued and run in parallel with the planning process to promote their enhanced performance. Moreover, stakeholder preparation requires skilled and experienced specialists to use and adapt appropriate activities for each different stakeholder group (Kelly et al. 2004). The main tasks of the specialists in preparation will be translating the data into an accessible and understandable format for all relevant stakeholders, using appropriate outreach techniques for each stakeholder type, as well as creating dialogue between and among stakeholder groups to help to melt the ice and establish the relationships between the stakeholders before their engagement (Preskill & Jones 2009). There are three main tasks which need to be followed:

i) Building stakeholder understanding. This step aims to raise the awareness and educate the stakeholders about the requirements of ecotourism development and how to differentiate it from other types of tourism development. It also aims to provide the stakeholders with a clear understanding about project objectives and the activities required to achieve them, in terms of both short- and long-term outputs. Furthermore, valuable information should be provided about the benefits of stakeholder participation during the process and the techniques to be used. The literature offers a range of techniques to build this background, such as establishing awareness-raising campaigns, formal and informal forums, and fieldwork training.

ii) Setting up the relations between and among different stakeholder groups. The preparation activities provide an important opportunity to start dialogue which can break the ice between different stakeholder groups and help them to understand the importance of working together (Preskill & Jones 2009). This step will also help the conveners to understand the characteristics of the stakeholders and the main conflict points between them. This information can be used in designing the next phases of the planning process. Informal meetings and social events will be useful in

attaining this goal. The stakeholders need to be encouraged and prepared, during these dialogues, to suspend judgement, to be open to all other points of view, and to be creative and adopt untraditional approaches to address the challenges (UNDP 2009).

iii) Defining the roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder group during the process. The preparation activities provide a good opportunity to involve the stakeholders in defining their responsibilities, which will be valuable to both stakeholders and the conveners. Knowing the roles in advance will help the stakeholders to manage their own time and participate in all the required activities as well as motivating them to know when to actively participate. It should also help the convener to prepare each stakeholder group to perform its roles. Furthermore, the terms of reference (TOR) for involving the stakeholders, particularly the organisations, will be set up by the working group and the high-level primary stakeholders to predefine a description and timeline of stakeholder roles during different stages of participation (Drafting Group 2002).

Hence, stakeholder preparation is a critical stage designed to enhance stakeholder inputs. It is important to start these preparation activities early but they should be continued throughout the process. The procedures of preparation need to cover all the relevant stakeholder groups and to be concerned with three main aspects; i) building stakeholder understanding; ii) establishing the relationships between and among different stakeholder groups; and iii) defining the role of each stakeholder group.

Consequently, critical questions include:

- Are there any preparation events for stakeholders both before and throughout the planning process?
- Were all the stakeholder groups adequately prepared?

3.4 The evaluation procedures

The essential purpose of evaluation in the context of collaborative planning processes is to identify whether an initiative is likely to be successful in accomplishing its objectives, and continually reviewing the process to make incremental improvements throughout to try to ensure that targets will be met (Drafting Group 2002; Kelly, Essex & Glegg 2012). Evaluation is a powerful learning tool to generate lessons for future practice and to satisfy the greatest number of stakeholders, thereby enhancing their commitment to plan implementation (Lengrand & Associés 2006; Morton 2009). Evaluation should not be an afterthought but it should be built into the design of the process from the beginning. Moreover, evaluation needs to be a cyclical process questioning the legitimacy of participatory processes and the appropriateness of the solutions they develop (Innes & Booher 1999). The continual evaluation of a collaborative process will help the conveners to determine if some areas need to be refocused to ensure that the process is moving towards the intended outcomes (Gepraegs 2008). The main types of evaluation required to set up a proper framework for evaluating the collaborative planning process to improve tangible and intangible outcomes will now be discussed.

Evaluation can generally be categorised based on its purpose into three main types: i) Accountability evaluation aims to make some judgement on the outcome qualities. It generally compares the results against the initiative's objectives or a set of criteria which were developed by the evaluators. It is the most common evaluation form; ii) Formative evaluation aims to provide information to improve stakeholder participation through evaluating the outcomes. There are few case studies in the context of the stakeholder participation that have used and discussed formative evaluation in the literature (such as regional planning for South East Queensland) (Cameron & Johnson 2004); and iii) Knowledge evaluation seeks to contribute to an understanding of the factors which affect stakeholder participation in the process and activities. This type of evaluation requires some theoretical framework to explain and compare the results (Cameron, Smith & Johnson 2005). According to many, including Innes and Booher (1999) and Kelly, Essex and Glegg (2012), a systematic evaluation to assess both the process and outcomes will be more effective because the two cannot

be neatly separated in a consensus building process. It seeks to examine process issues such as whether all relevant stakeholders were included, or whether the participation activities were appropriate. It also focuses on assessing the tangible (plan, agreement and regulations) and intangible (social, intellectual and political capital) outcomes, such as whether a high-quality agreement was achieved or whether shared intellectual capital was built.

3.4.1 Evaluation framework

The evaluation framework is grounded in a systematic evaluation, which is considered the most proper type for the objectives of this research because it assesses the success of collaborative planning based on a multiple criteria evaluation for both the process and the outcomes. The main principles of this framework will be: i) the evaluation should be based on clear criteria covering the spectrum of the potential benefits from the collaborative process and outcomes (Innes & Booher 1999); ii) all stakeholders should be involved in the evaluation procedures; iii) an external evaluator is required for an unbiased evaluation and is able to identify actual weakness and issues (OECD 2004); and iv) the evaluation needs to be continual and carried out at different times through a project's lifetime (Gepraegs 2008).

Although there is a rich body of literature discussing evaluation from two perspectives to cover the process and the outcomes, a third layer needs to be added to the evaluation framework to cover the pre-process stages of collaborative planning which potentially widens the benefits of stakeholder collaboration and increases the likelihood of the plan being implemented. Therefore, this evaluation framework comprises three main layers with each layer consisting of two main components (Table 3-4). The first layer considers pre-process evaluation to assess the previous studies and attempts to evaluate the quality of the information as a basis for the planning process and decision-making. The second layer is the process evaluation, which seeks to assess both the quality of the process and any adjustment made to remedy identified problems before the implementation stage. The last layer is outcome evaluation taking both an intermediate and long term perspective.

Table (3-4) The evaluation framework

Evaluation layers		Concept	Objective
Pre-process	Evaluating the previous studies and attempts	To avoid their problems and maximise the potential through the new initiatives	To determine actual reasons why previous plans were not implemented
	Input evaluation (inputs into planning process)	Improving the information basis for the planning process will improve the outcomes and lead to better results	Input indicators measure the quality of the information, data, and analysis that goes into the planning process before embarking on any decision
Process	Process evaluation (quality of the process)	Improving the process of decision-making to ensure more satisfactory outcomes and remedying the process problems	Process indicators provide benchmarks for evaluating the planning process and steps to adjust its problems and improve the outcomes
	Output evaluation (assesses the quality of the plan or agreement) *	Improving outputs will ensure more success in producing results	Output indicators measure the products of the planning process, such as plans, policies, and regulations before the implementation stage to lead immediate plan improvement and changes
The outcomes	Performance indicators (measures of tangible and intangible outcomes' effectiveness)	Improve the outcomes through shorter feedback loop	Performance indicators (also called intermediate outcomes) assess the shorter-term performance of specific plans. For example, a quarterly monitoring report prepared to determine whether to continue or change the implementation strategies
	Outcome evaluation (impact measures)	Monitoring of actual results is important to measure success of the efforts	Outcome measures (also called long-term outcomes or impact measures) to assess the actual on the ground changes that result from the combination of plans, and social, economic, and environmental trends

Source: The author based on Cameron and Johnson (2004); and Margerum (2011)
*output evaluation aims to improve and adjust the outputs before the implementation stages so the framework puts this component within the process evaluation layer

The evaluation framework needs to be taken into account when designing any collaborative planning process as it seeks to explicitly define objectives (preferably quantified), combined with timetables for achieving objectives and benchmarks against which progress and outcomes can be assessed. This evaluation framework should be iterative and seek to improve the process and outcomes as well as to make

the collaborative planning process more transparent for the participants (Drafting Group Cameron, Smith & Johnson 2005; 2002).

Consequently, the research questions are:

- Was there any evaluation procedure for these initiatives? If yes, when and by whom were the initiatives evaluated?

3.5 The obstacles to the stakeholder involvement and collaboration

Stakeholder participation in ecotourism development planning is the core factor that significantly increases the likelihood of the plan being implemented. However, there are many barriers and challenges that create hurdles to the effective participation of relevant stakeholders (Aref & Redzuan 2008). Moreover, collaboration in ecotourism development might face greater challenges than other areas of development because there are attributes of ecotourism such as ambiguity of the ecotourism concepts for the majority of the stakeholders which mean they may not recognise the importance of participating or the convener may overlook their value (Choi 2005). Understanding and anticipating these barriers is significant in minimising their effects and promoting individual and organisational involvement during the planning process (Dukeshire & Thurlow 2002) If these challenges and barriers are ignored, stakeholder participation may raise levels of conflicts rather than identifying shared solutions that meet stakeholder needs. This section investigates the main barriers that may prevent an acceptable level of stakeholder participation during the ecotourism planning processes in developing countries.

Tosun (2000), and Dogra and Gupta (2012) have asserted that most developing countries are characterised by three main structural deficiencies: i) socio-economic factors, which includes low standard of living, lack of service from a welfare state, low economic growth rate, and high unemployment; ii) political factors, which encompass features such as high centralisation in the public administration system, elite domination and a high level of favouritism and nepotism; and iii) cultural features like widespread illiteracy and most people living in highly stratified societies. These kinds of deficiencies create challenges and barriers in the process of stakeholder participation and limit the success of the development process.

A number of authors on collaborative planning in sustainable tourism development have tried to classify these barriers and challenges to facilitate a better understanding of these effects on stakeholder participation (Choi 2005; Tosun 2000; Tseng & Penning-Rowsell 2012). The main barriers discussed can be separated into two broad groups: i) structural barriers, which relate to the institutional limitations and inefficiencies in the administration of the public system; and ii) stakeholder barriers, which relate to attitudes, perceptions and capabilities of each stakeholder group towards ecotourism development in particular and participation and collaboration between themselves (Aref & Redzuan 2008; Choi 2005). Limitations in the operational process could also be added as a third barrier to stakeholder engagement processes during the lifetime of the projects. Furthermore, to facilitate more scope for finding solutions and overcoming the barriers, the obstacles to the stakeholder involvement and collaboration will need to be discussed more systemically using the categorisation outlined above.

a) Deficiencies in government: From a review of the literature it can be emphasised that the main barriers associated with the structure of the governmental institutions and the way they operate during the planning process include: i) centralisation of the public administration system. Development planning in the majority of developing countries is a highly centralised activity. It is managed directly by political executives at the national level. So the influence of stakeholder participation on the planning process and implementation of local plans is limited and the vertical distance between government and stakeholders is widening (Tosun 2000); ii) a lack of coordination and highly fragmented government agencies leads to significant overlap and duplication in their plans and activities for the same resources (Loughlin & Nada 2012); iii) a lack of resources including information, financial resources, and human capacity leads to an inability to put the development plans into practice. The majority of development projects stop once the international assistance ends (Wafik 2002); iv) a lack of political will, and elite domination increases the negative impact on the resources as a result of resistance of the local communities to any development that does not meet their basic needs (Tosun 1998); and v) the lack of

an appropriate legal framework leads to dualism in functions and conflicting roles between the authorities charged with ecotourism development (Choi 2005).

b) Deficiencies in local communities: The most critical factors that create hurdles to effective local community participation in development planning are: i) a lack of trust in the government as a result of previous unmet promises and lack of transparency in decision-making; ii) a lack of awareness about the requirements of ecotourism development and differentiating it from other types of tourism development; iii) a lack of awareness about participation requirements and process during ecotourism planning; and iv) widespread illiteracy and a low standard of living within the communities means that individuals are more concentrated with meeting daily needs and providing the basic public services, rather than looking forward to an aspirational future (Dogra & Gupta 2012; Tosun & Jenkins 1996).

c) Deficiencies in operationalising collaboration in ecotourism planning include:

i) Unclear objectives and uncertainties surrounding stakeholder influence. From the outset of the planning process, this is one of the most important factors preventing stakeholders from being active participants within the planning process. The conveners should define the objectives clearly at the outset, which can then become the criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of stakeholder participation (Tseng & Penning-Rowsell 2012);

ii) Deficiencies in identifying the relevant stakeholders at the outset may lead to marginalisation of key stakeholders who may be important for the planning and implementation process;

iii) The lack, or poor analysis of stakeholders, is one of the main reasons for a limited understanding of the diversity of their power and the relationships between them. This can lead to inappropriate roles being defined and levels of participation for each stakeholder group being misunderstood (Schmeer 2001);

iv) Late stakeholder engagement during the planning process is often cited as a critical reason why stakeholders are resistant to the plan and its implementation, because they believe that the decisions have already been made. On the other

hand, early stakeholder engagement can help to create trust and gives them a sense of ownership over the process (Tseng & Penning-Rowsell 2012);

v) Inappropriate and insufficient methods of stakeholder involvement in each stage of the planning process;

vi) A lack of expertise in ecotourism development planning often creates ineffective ecotourism planning in the developing countries (Tosun 1998).

In conclusion, there are many barriers and challenges that create hurdles to effective stakeholder participation and collaboration throughout the planning process (Aref & Redzuan 2008). These barriers are an extension of the prevailing social, political and economic structures that operate more generally in developing countries (Dogra & Gupta 2012). Understanding these barriers is the first and most important step to overcoming them. These barriers can be categorised into three main groups: deficiencies in government, deficiencies in local communities and deficiencies in operationalising collaborative planning in ecotourism.

Consequently, the research will investigate:

- What are the barriers and challenges in operationalising effective stakeholder involvement and collaboration through the process of ecotourism planning?

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has explained how the conceptual framework for collaborative ecotourism planning has been developed. The conceptual framework has identified four factors that help to increase the likelihood of effective plan preparation and implementation for ecotourism development. This can be used to evaluate ecotourism development planning in practice. Table 3-5 identifies the critical factors for evaluating whether ecotourism collaborative planning can be viewed as being successful. The conceptual framework contains four main elements: 1) a stakeholder network building process; 2) a stakeholder engagement process, including: a) defining the stakeholder roles and their levels of participation; b) identifying stakeholder involvement methods; c) promoting appropriate stakeholder motivation methods; and d) determining mechanisms for preparing stakeholders to be effectively involved; 3) the evaluation procedures; and 4) an identification of barriers to stakeholder involvement. Each factor has its own set of questions that can be used to assess the

success, or otherwise, of ecotourism collaborative planning initiatives in this research within the context of Egypt.

Table (3-5) The critical factors for successful ecotourism collaborative planning

Critical factors		The interview questions
1- Stakeholder network building		- How have the conveners been identified? What are their critical characteristics? - How have stakeholders been identified and analysed in Egyptian ecotourism initiatives? What procedures have been used to build the stakeholder network? - What dialogue is there between stakeholder representatives and their parent bodies? - What factors influence the efficiency of stakeholder networks in ecotourism planning in Egypt?
2- Stakeholder engagement in planning	i) Stakeholder roles and their level of participation throughout the planning process	- Which form of participation was used throughout the planning process? - What were stakeholder roles during these stages? - Were all stakeholders involved in the whole planning process?
	ii) The stakeholder involvement methods	- Which methods of stakeholder involvement have been chosen at each stage of the planning process? Were they appropriate or not? - Could stakeholder involvement have been enhanced during these engagements?
	iii) The stakeholder motivation	- What mechanisms were used to motivate each stakeholder group to participate and remain in the planning process? Were they appropriate for each group or not? - Were sufficient resources to cover costs of the incentive activities for the different stakeholder groups allocated?
	iv) Preparing stakeholders for involving in planning process	- Are there any preparation events for stakeholders both before and throughout the planning process? - Were all the stakeholder groups adequately prepared?
3- Evaluation procedures		Was there any evaluation procedure for these initiatives? If yes, when and by whom were the initiatives evaluated?
4- The obstacles to the stakeholder involvement and collaboration		What are the barriers and challenges in operationalising effective stakeholder involvement and collaboration through the process of ecotourism planning?

Source: The author

The next chapter will provide the Egyptian context for ecotourism development planning as a precursor to the empirical analysis.

Part Two: Evaluating ecotourism in practice

Chapter Four: Egyptian context for ecotourism development planning

Chapter Four
Egyptian context for ecotourism development planning

This chapter is designed to provide an understanding of the Egyptian context for ecotourism development planning in order to pave the way for evaluating specific initiatives. The Egyptian context can be explored through three parts. The first (4.1) provides an overview of Egypt in terms of its geographical location, social and cultural characteristics, administrative system, and economic context. The second part (4.2) focuses on tourism development through the evolution of Egyptian tourism strategies, and the challenges in Egyptian tourism development. The potential of ecotourism development to mitigate these challenges will be outlined, including a brief description of ecotourism development institutions. The final part (4.3) of the chapter explores the evolution of the planning system, the planning regulations and planning levels in Egypt to provide a contextual understanding of the challenges of applying a CP approach.

4.1 Egyptian perspective

This section seeks to provide a general picture of Egypt through three sub-sections: the first sub-section (4.1.1) covers the geographical dimensions, describing Egypt's location, characteristics and features. The second (4.1.2) identifies the social and cultural features of Egyptian communities. The third (4.1.3) discusses the administrative system. The final section (4.1.4) is concerned with some of the economic aspects of Egyptian tourism.

4.1.1 Geographical features

Egypt enjoys a unique geographical location. It is located near the heart of the world (Figure 4-1), at the crossroads between Africa, the Middle East and Europe. This location has made Egypt a hub of world trade and tourism for thousands of years. Egypt's territory encompasses an area of about one million square kilometres (386,100 squares miles), extending from the Mediterranean Sea (MS) in the north to the Sudan border in the south, and from the Libyan border in the west to the Red Sea (RS) in the east (El-Barmelgy 2002; Ibrahim 2010). Egypt has many unique

characteristics which, because of its geographical location, generate both advantages and disadvantages for its development, notably in relation to the tourism industry. This because Egypt is part of three important regions – the African, Middle East and Arab nations – which represent a huge tourist market in themselves – as well as being attractive to the Western European market, as a result of its rich cultural legacy. Moreover, it has great geographical potential, with the River Nile separating the dunes and oases in the Western Desert from the mountains and valleys of the Eastern Desert. Consequently, Egypt can be classified geographically into four main divisions, Figure (4-2): The Nile Valley and Delta, The Western Desert, The Eastern Desert and The Sinai Peninsula

Figure (4-1) Egypt's location on the world map
Source: Nations Online (2003)

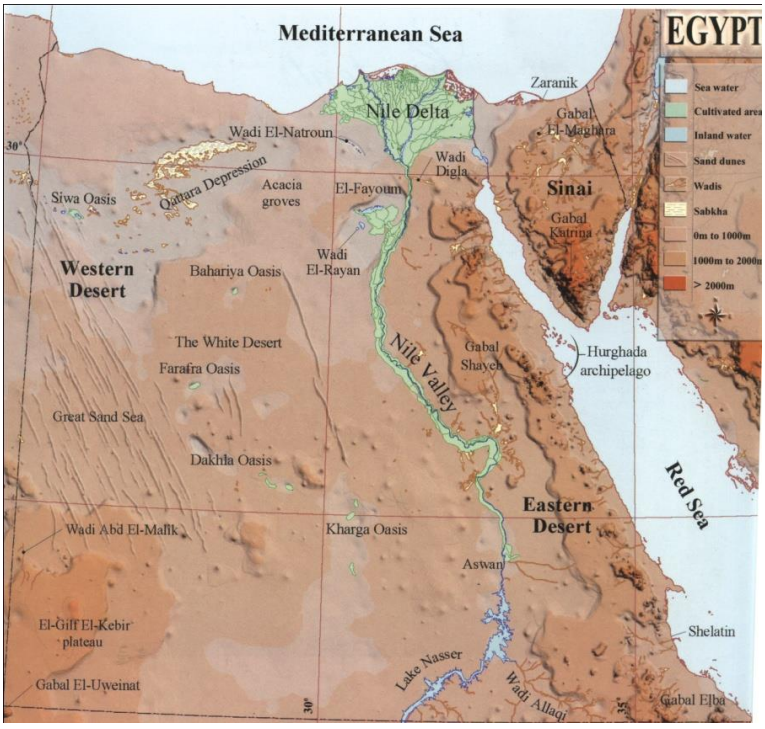


Figure (4-2) Egypt's geographical features
Source: Snyder (2004)

4.1.2 Social and cultural characteristics

This section aims to identify the social and cultural characteristics of Egyptian people because these are significant in framing the potential for the collaborative ecotourism planning process. Egyptian people have differing social and cultural patterns according to their way of life, social fabric and economic activities. There are many techniques to classify a community's characteristics but this research focuses on four of them, i.e. those most related to the research objectives: the lifestyle, i.e. the manner in which individuals or groups live; the social fabric, which can be used to describe the relationships between people in the community such as ethnic and tribal affiliations (Mostafa 1991); architectural style; and, economic activities. Consequently, Egyptian people can be classified into four broad groups (Table 4-1).

Table (4-1) The characteristics of the four main groups of Egyptian people

group	Classification criteria and features			
	Lifestyle	Social fabric	Architectural style	Economic activities
First	Bedouin	One homogenous component and coherent	Primitive architectural style and appropriate to the environment	Primitive and simple activities
Second	Rural	Multiple coherent components and homogenous	Conventional and conventional complex architecture style	Traditional productive activities
Third	Semi-urban	Multiple coherent components but heterogeneous	Conventional complex and modern architecture style	Modern economic activities
Fourth	Urban	Multiple heterogeneous components and incoherent	Modern architecture style	Modern investment activities

Source: The author

The first group is the Bedouin tribes, whose lifestyles are characterised by unique customs, folklore and a cultural legacy. The social fabric of the Bedouin communities represents a good example of a coherent and homogenous people. The Bedouin community structure is composed of tribes that contain kinships, clans and extended families (grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins) all living nearby or in the same household (see Figure 4-3). Each component of the structure has a leader or chief below the tribal chief (sheikh). This sheikh is the most important person in the tribe's structure, who alone has the ability to negotiate regarding tribal assets, crops

and livestock (Fathy 1995). The sheikh will play a significant role in the collaborative planning process because he should be obeyed and followed by all tribe members. Moreover, the tribal community has a distinct administrative system with a senate composed of tribal chiefs who will discuss public affairs, take decisions and resolve conflicts within the tribes themselves, and between tribes and others through their own rules that have been derived from their customs and religion. Rarely does the state government or the police need to become involved to resolve local disputes within these tribal communities (Fathy 1995).

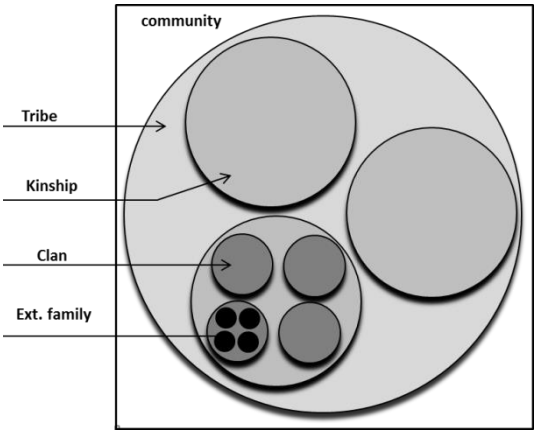


Figure (4-3) Bedouin community structure
Source: The author

Figure (4-4) Example of Nubian houses and folklore
Source: Salem (2010)

Regarding the architectural style, it can be described as simple, primitive and appropriate for the environment, where the materials used are environmentally friendly. The houses are generally scattered and take many forms, including tents for the Sinai tribes, wooden and palm leaf kiosks for the Burullus lake fishermen, and brick houses for the Nubian tribes in the south (see Figure 4-4).

The economic activities are traditional, comprising what may be described as simple activities such as grazing, agriculture, fishing, collection of medicinal plants and traditional handicrafts designed to meet basic needs (El-Khodary 2000).

The Bedouin tribes in Egypt are not one type but can be further sub-divided into three sub-categories:

- All Sinai tribes (settled and unsettled); these are often undeveloped and poor communities. Some of these tribes engage in violence and abuse of the natural environment as a result of their being excluded from national development strategies partly owing to the unstable political situation in these areas.

- All oases communities such as those located in the northern part of the Fayoum Governorate, alongside the coast of the Red Sea, and around the lakes. These communities are more developed and stable than those of Sinai, and the natural environment is respected as it represents a source of livelihood.
- The Nubian tribes are found in southern Egypt, from south of the Aswan to the north Sudan border. They have a very special culture: Nubian people are not allowed to marry anyone from outside their community, their language is Nubian and many cannot ever understand the Arabic language (Egypt's official language).

The second group comprises rural communities, whose lifestyle is relatively static, quiet and stable, and not stressed or crowded, unlike urban areas. Their social fabric usually consists of extended families. The communities in this group are coherent and homogenous as a result of maintaining the old cultural customs. The oldest man of the family acts as the key person who should be followed by all family members. So he should play a crucial role in any network building as part of a collaborative process (Essa 1984). However, these communities also suffer from many social problems, such as high illiteracy rates and low incomes. This can represent a big barrier to them becoming involved with, and collaborating in, the development process. The architectural style for the majority of the rural houses is conventional, made from mud and brick with wooden roofs. In the last two decades, the architecture has been changed to a more complex yet still conventional style, with walls made from red brick and concrete roofs. Moreover, buildings heights have increased, with more than two floors becoming common (El-Kady 2005). The dominant economic activities of these communities include agriculture and livestock management, which represent the main source of income. These rural communities are mainly located on the old agricultural lands in the Nile Valley, Delta and majority of the Fayoum Governorate.

The third group is the semi-urban communities, which are characterised by migrants from rural to urban centres or small cities. Although they live in an urban environment, the lifestyles of the majority of these people are still close to the way that traditional villagers live. They live in specific areas of the city in groups based on extended families or their place of origin (as residents of village X or Y). The social

fabric, despite the community containing various extended and nuclear families originating in different places, is still coherent. However, it is considered the weakest social fabric, depending on ethnic affiliation (El-Kady 2005; Mostafa 1991). Consequently, this group requires special efforts to identify its key actors and establish a stakeholder network able and willing to engage with the planning process. The architectural style contains two building modes. The first is the conventional complex, with walls made from red brick with a concrete roof. The second comprises modern buildings with a concrete skeleton, many floors and modern forms. Economic activities are varied. They include commerce, services and some small-scale handicraft activities based on agriculture and livestock production (dates, cheese and handmade carpets, etc.) as well as touristic activities, especially in the coastal areas and around the protected areas. These semi-urban communities are located in small and medium-sized cities in the Nile Valley, Delta and the Red Sea coast.

The fourth group describes urban communities who live in the main and metropolitan cities such as Cairo, Alexandria, Port Said and the capitals of several Governorates. The lifestyles in these cities have become competitive, overcrowded and stressful due to the extremely high cost of living. The social fabric of these communities consists of nuclear and small families from different origins, backgrounds and cultures, who have migrated there in anticipation of secure employment opportunities. Accordingly, these communities have lost loyalty to their traditional society, and have become heterogeneous and incoherent. Therefore, these communities require great effort to identify key actors and a stakeholder network to be engaged with the planning process. The architectural style is dominated by modern styles which are often not appropriate for Egyptian conditions. In addition, this group is characterised by ‘slum areas’ which have appeared as a result of migration from rural areas to the main cities (GOPP 2012). The economic activities are dominated mainly by industrial, commercial or touristic activities. Recently, national policy has been encouraging a transition towards a knowledge-based economy (El-Tanany 2013).

Synthesis

Egypt has four broad distinct social and cultural groups. The Bedouin and the Rural groups have an obvious social fabric and there are already key people who can help the conveners to build a stakeholder network. Moreover, these communities have a unique lifestyle, which attracts a significant proportion of the ecotourism market. Their economic activities and house styles blend into the locally distinctive natural environment. However, the other two groups require special efforts to identify their key actors and establish a stakeholder network able to engage with the planning process. The residence styles of these communities are not matched with the environment. In addition, they contain 'slum areas' which appeared as a result of migration from the rural areas.

4.1.3 Administration system

This section discusses the Egyptian administrative system, which acts as one of the most essential requirements for effective planning, implementation and monitoring of development generally, and ecotourism particularly. The administrative system refers to the operating authorities that provide and organise the state services and development. It contains three main branches: Executive, Legislative[13] and Judiciary[14] authorities. This research will focus on the executive authority, which is the one most relevant to its research objectives.

The executive authority in Egypt, as in most developing countries, can be described as a highly centralised authority where central government dominates all local administration functions, as described below.

At the head of central government is the President, who is the head of the executive system and the dominant figure in executive administration; the Prime Minister – who is appointed by the President – is the second most important person. They work in partnership to formulate the general policies of the state and supervise their implementation through a Deputy Prime Minister and committees. The Cabinet is

[13] The Legislative: consists of the Parliament and the Consultative Council. They discuss and propose the regulations and send them to the President to issue the laws. They are mandated to accept general state policies, the economic and social development plans as well as the state budget. They are also tasked with monitoring and evaluating how the executive authority works (Loughlin & Nada 2012).

[14] The Judiciary: is an independent authority; it exercises its duties through different degree courts.

responsible for preparing the general budget and socio-economic plans of the state, which should be approved by the Parliament. The most important roles of the cabinet are coordination between Ministries by reviewing their policies and plans. Meanwhile, each Minister is responsible for drafting and implementing relevant policies according to the general policy framework created by the state (Eiweida 2000; Loughlin & Nada 2012).

Egyptian Ministries are classified into three types based on their relationships with local administration units (as presented in Figure 4-5). The first type is 'State Ministries', which mainly perform technical functions at the central level and are not actually engaged in implementation of the major programmes. This includes the Minister of State for Environmental Affairs (MSEA). The second type of Ministry is mandated to implement their plans and activities on the ground, although they are not required to transfer their competences to the local administrative units. Instead they create regional offices at the Governorate level. Unfortunately, these offices do not follow the policies of the Governorates but, rather, follow – technically and administratively – the policies of their mandating central Ministry or agency. The majority of these Ministries are usually concerned with delivering economic development, such the Ministry of Industry and the Ministry of Tourism. The third type involves Ministries that have moved some of their responsibilities to local administrative units through directorates. Most are mandated with human development responsibilities, such as education, health and housing, etc. These directorates follow and report technically to the relevant Ministry, while they follow and report administratively to the Governorate[15]. When reviewing the decision-making powers and the budgeting process adopted by the second and third types of Ministries, it could be argued that their excessive centralisation and dualism (EC-3 and EC-14)[16] has led to a weakening of the ability of local administrative units to achieve or manage development activities to meet local needs (Loughlin & Nada 2012).

[15] According to Article 3 of the Local Administration Law 7.

[16] A reference to the interviewee/s: the acronyms refer to the interviewee groups: EC= Experts & Consultants in ecotourism development or participatory planning, PS = An employee in the Public Sector, PrS = Representative of the Private Sector bodies, NG = A member of NGO boards, LC = A member of the key persons of the Local Communities, T= Representative of the ecotourists, FIO = A member of the Funder and International Organisations; and the number refers to the serial number of the interviewee in each group.

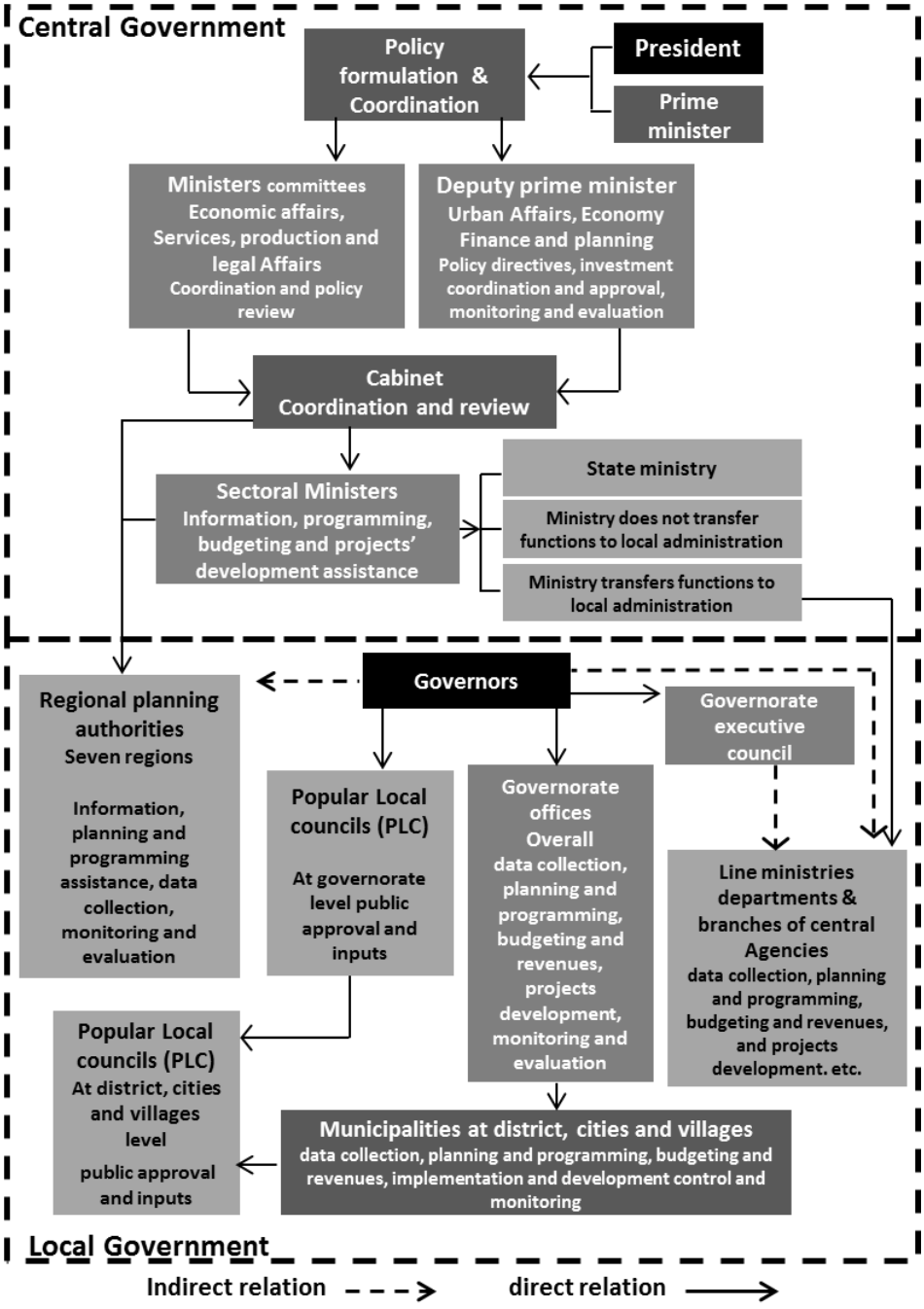


Figure (4-5) Executive Authorities' functional structure
Source: The author based on Eiweida (2000); Loughlin and Nada (2012)

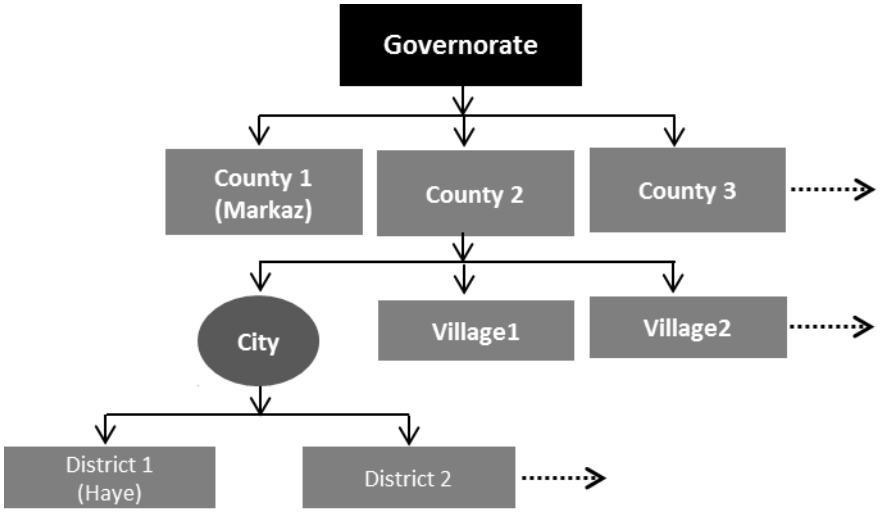


Figure (4-6) Local administration units
Source: The author based on Eiweida (2000)

Regarding the local administrative system, Egypt is divided into 27 Governorates; each Governorate, as Figure (4-6) shows, is sub-divided into county (Markaz or City Region), and each county is composed of at least one city and group of villages. The cities are further divided into one or more district (Haye). As Figure (4-5) illustrates, the local administrative system is led by the Governor as head of the system, who is appointed by the President. The Governorate administrative system involves: i) Governorate affairs offices, which are responsible for data collection, planning and programming, budgeting and revenues, and monitoring and evaluation; ii) directorates, which are the representatives of Ministries concerned with human development, e.g. education, health, etc.; and iii) a Governorate executive council, which (chaired by the Governor) has been given various mandates by local administration laws, such as following up the implementation of key projects and services and assisting the Governor in drawing up the Governorate's administrative and financial plans.

At a local level there is also the Popular Local Council (PLC), whose members are all elected. The elected PLC has acquired the power, at least theoretically, to approve or reject the local budget. PLCs are designed to reflect and organise public participation activities, with general review and consultative responsibilities.[17] Although PLCs have the power to seek to resolve local problems with the relevant

[17] According to Article 12 of the Local Administrative Law (43/1979).

Ministry or the Prime Minister if the Governorate budget cannot cover them, they do not have the actual authority to carry out their responsibilities.

There are also Regional Planning Centres (RPCs)[18], which follow the guidance of the General Organization of Physical Planning (GOPP), which is a central state authority. They not have any direct relationships with the Governorates within which they operate.

At the local level, a Municipality is the executive council at a county, city or village administrative unit. It is mandated to perform the same functions as the Governorate executive council, albeit at a local scale. Although the structure of functions performed at the local level looks very simple, in reality, municipalities often cannot fulfil any of their functions efficiently because of a shortage of qualified technical staff, weak coordination and the lack of any information exchange between organisations (Eiweida 2000).

Synthesis

The administrative system described above is highly centralised and dominated by one person (the President) who appoints all the high posts in the government, such as the Prime Minister, Ministers and Governors. Therefore, the administrative leaders of Egypt tend to be narrow-minded and interested in short-term benefits to satisfy their superiors (EC-13). In addition, the administrative system suffers from vertical and horizontal fragmentation that has led to widely overlapping remits and consequently big conflicts in their responsibilities and plans. Although in theory Cabinet and Governorate offices should provide horizontal coordination between authorities, both are struggling with numerous responsibilities, efforts, and activities covering many different fields, such as data collection, planning and budgeting, etc. Similarly, there is no effective vertical coordination between the central and local government (Murad 2012). Nevertheless, local government has been dominated by the central administrations. Such deficiencies in the existing administrative system can be

[18] GOPP has seven regional planning authorities; each one acting as a decentralised arm of the GOPP in preparing, implementing and monitoring strategic plans.

considered the main obstacle to the emergence of an effective CP in development planning.

4.1.4 Economic contexts

The Egyptian economy comprises four main sectors (agriculture, industry, tourism and services), although this section focuses only on tourism because this sector relates closely to the research objectives.

Tourism has been the fastest-growing sector of the Egyptian economy for the last two decades (Leila 2009). It acted as one of the main sources of national income and a pillar for comprehensive development in Egypt. Moreover, tourism is integrated with more than 70 feeder and supplementary services and industries, such as construction, transportation, restaurants, bazaars and guides (JICA 2000). Tourism represents nearly 40% of Egyptian non-commodity exports, and is the main source of foreign currency (making up 20% of Egypt's foreign exchange revenue in 2010[19]) (Manakos 2013). Tourism is also one of the most labour-intensive activities, providing 4.5 million direct and indirect jobs (each direct job opportunity in tourism creates three indirect opportunities in other economic sectors). This was equivalent to about 13.9% of the total labour force in 2010. The total tourism contribution to GDP in 2010 was 15.8% (WTTC 2011). Due to recent political disturbances, since the 25th January Revolution in 2011, the significance of the tourism sector has faltered. There was a slight upswing in 2012, but since then it has fallen away again sharply (see Table 4-2):

Table (4-2) Changes of the tourism sector as a result of the political turmoil

	2010	2011	2012	2013
The tourism contribution to GDP	15.8%	14.8%	13.4%	9.5%
The tourism contribution to employment	13.9%	13.1%	12.1%	8.9%

Source: The author based on WTTC (2011, 2012, 2014)

Although the tourism sector is in decline, many anticipate a quick renewal of tourist arrivals when greater political stability is achieved. Egypt's Central Bank confirmed there was economic upturn in the tourism sector between June 2012 and

[19] The research was designed using 2010 statistics which reflect the tourism demand before the unstable political situation dating from the 25th January Revolution in 2011.

June 2013, when the number of tourists increased by 13% (ECB 2013). Some economists are optimistic about the future, highlighting how the tourism sector recovered quickly from previous terrorist attacks and the Gulf war in the 1990s, in part helped by international investment and the role of global tour operators (Rady & TDA 2002). However, although these initiatives helped the tourism sector to recover, they also led to environmental degradation as a result of a state strategy which was concerned with the number of tourists rather than quality of the tourism offered (EC-8). Based on experience, once political stability returns, the state needs to involve relevant stakeholders in developing sustainable strategies which emphasise the quality of the tourism sector's offering.

Egyptian share of world tourism in 2010 was around 1.2%, equivalent to about 23% of total Middle East tourism, and 1% of total international tourism revenues (SIS 2013c). However, the competitiveness rank of the Egyptian tourism sector dropped six places from 58th out of 124 in 2007, to 64th out of 133 in 2009, and then, two years later, Egypt dropped a further 11 places in 2011[20] to become 75th out of 139 countries worldwide (WEF 2007, 2011). Egypt's decline is a result of: i) long-term issues impeding effective tourism development. According to The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index (TTCI), these issues are: safety and security (Egypt's rank in this criteria is 135th out of 139), environmental sustainability (113th), IT infrastructure (93rd), tourism services and infrastructure (88th), biodiversity and quality of natural resources (85th), and education and training of human resources (93rd) (WEF 2011). All these factors inhibit the growth of Egyptian tourism and potentially could be improved through the establishment of partnerships with the relevant stakeholders, e.g. the private sector, to address the problems outlined above (EC-5 and EC-10); ii) a focus on beach tourism, which actually provides 75% of the total Egyptian tourism market (Hilmi et al. 2012). That has led to degradation of the coastal and marine resources. For instance, in the Hurghada, 50 genera of corals have been damaged (Hilmi et al. 2012); and iii) increasing local competition from countries such as Turkey, Tunisia, Morocco, Israel and Lebanon, which has started to attract part of the

[20] The effects of the political turmoil are not yet captured by the data discussed within this report because it was completed by March 2011.

Middle Eastern and North African tourist market, particularly as many of these countries had not, until recently, experienced the same political problems as in Egypt. Egypt could mitigate some of these challenges by employing its natural and cultural potentials in developing more sustainable ecotourism to diversify its tourism market.

4.2 Tourism development in Egypt

Tourism development in Egypt has passed through four main stages (TDA et al. 2009). During the first stage, before the 1980s, Egypt depended on one sole attraction and was an embryonic destination. This sole attraction comprised the antiquities such as the Pyramids in Cairo and the Temples at Luxor. However, the early 1980s witnessed a move towards the second stage of tourism development: Egypt provided mass tourism associated with natural attractions in the form of recreational tourism based on shore and marine attractions primarily designed to stretch the length of stay of the customers who were part of the traditional tourist market (Helmy 2004). The third stage of Egyptian tourism development began in the early 1990s when Egypt adopted a new strategy based on diversification in terms of attraction, products and geographical areas. As well as the traditional cultural products, Egypt established a significant demand for its coastal recreational areas (Helmy 1999), using diving and snorkelling activities to increase the number of tourists targeting these natural coastal attractions. Additionally, at the end of this stage, Egyptian witnessed a move towards conference tourism (El-Barmelgy 2002). The rapid growth of tourism development in this stage caused environmental deterioration, particularly in the northern part of the Red Sea. Many coral communities were damaged (TDA et al. 2003). In response, the state launched a fourth stage, which started early in 2002 and has theoretically been focused on sustainable ecotourism. Unfortunately, Egypt has not effectively utilised the international funds that were made available to establish sustainable ecotourism. Egypt is still focusing on two main forms of attraction: historical heritage and natural coastal tourism so that it can appeal to the recreational tourism market (EC- 2).

In general, the tourism strategies adopted in Egypt during the four stages have been based on realising swift profits, economic growth and employment opportunities

(JICA 2000; TDA et al. 2009). Thus, about 90% of Egypt's tourism investment has been concentrated in the priority zones – the Gulf of Aquba, the Red Sea coast for natural and recreation attractions, and the Cairo and Upper Egypt zone for historical tourism (Figure 4-7). Investors were offered numerous incentives, including cheap land prices and exemption from tax for at least 10 years (JICA 2000; Rady & TDA 2002). As a result, Egypt achieved significant economic growth based on tourism and many new employment opportunities were provided, but the relationship between tourism and the environment become unbalanced (Hilmi et al. 2012). The cost of degradation of the natural resources such as coral reefs exceeded the economic benefits from tourism development. In the Hurghada region, for instance, the total cost[21] of degradation of the coral reefs and fisheries caused by unregulated tourism activities has been estimated at between US$ 2,626 and 2,673 million[22] per year compared with the total economic profits from Egyptian coral reefs in the same area, which was estimated to be only US$ 205.5 million to 1,800 million (Hilmi et al. 2012; World Bank 2002).

Due to the environmental degradation of many of the current tourism destinations, many investors are moving to more pristine destinations in the southern region of the Red Sea, the Mediterranean Sea along the North-West Coast, and the Western Desert. The growth of tourism development in these areas will increase the pressure on their natural resources, potentially leading to the same results as in the existing tourism zones (Chemonics & Environics 2002). Therefore, dozens of studies and plans (as will be detailed in Chapter Five) funded by international NGOs and activists were prepared to secure the potential of these new areas before they became degraded. However, these initiatives failed to meet their objectives because of a lack of active involvement from the relevant stakeholders (as will be discussed in Chapter

[21] Assessment of the cost of degradation has been estimated through two steps: i) the quantification of the physical losses of natural capital (coral reef habitats) as well as goods and services generated from the reef ecosystems owing to unregulated tourism activities; and ii) the monetary valuation of the physical losses

[22] These costs include:
a. loss of natural capital,
b. loss of income from marine recreational activities,
c. cost of shoreline protection, and
d. cost of loss of fishery resources (Hilmi et al. 2012).

Seven). So Egypt, in conjunction with international donors, should seek to collaborate with all stakeholders to develop these regions, which are characterised by highly vulnerable and sensitive areas, as well as mitigating the challenges that have faced the tourism development (which will be discussed in the next part) in order to establish a more sustainable pattern of development.

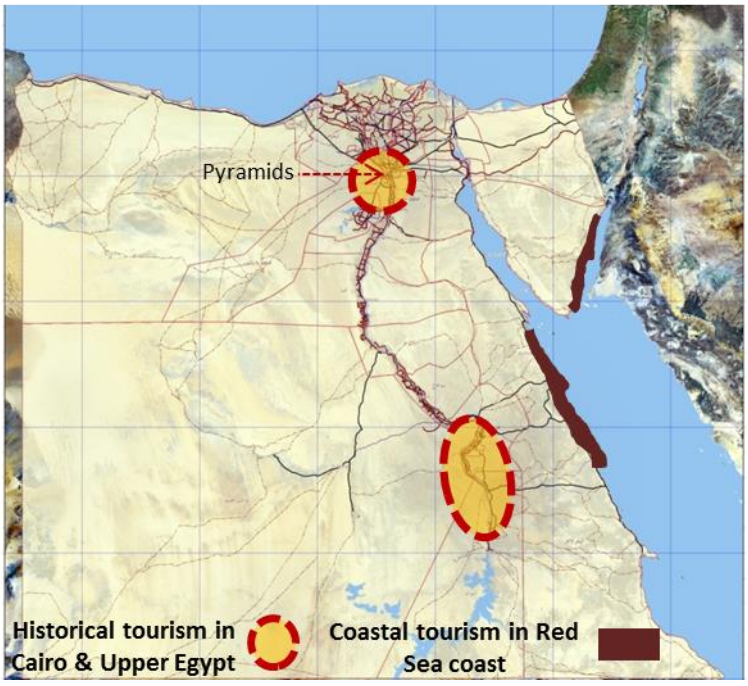


Figure (4-7) Egyptian Tourism Development Priority Zones
Source: The author based on El-Bamelgy (2002)

4.2.1 Challenges to Egyptian tourism development

Egyptian tourism development has faced numerous challenges and problems. These will be outlined next in order to provide a mechanism for avoiding similar problems in any future development. These challenges can be classified under two main groups: first, the weakness of Egyptian tourism products and, secondly, the pressures on, and threats to, Egyptian tourism products.

The main weaknesses in the tourism development sector in Egypt have resulted from the corruption and chaos in the administrative systems (discussed in section 4.1.3). The duplication and conflict as a result of fragmentations amongst governmental authorities has led to several problems. These include:

1. Low quality of infrastructure and poor connectivity between the destination areas. These need to be planned in advance and implemented to a high standard

in order to minimise the impact on the natural environment and meet the international requirements (Chemonics 2006a; El-Barmelgy 2002).

2. Poor management and monitoring of tourism development as a result of the conflicts in land ownership jurisdictions between governmental agencies (examples of this conflict will be discussed in Chapter Six). This has led to serious negative environmental impacts. Such effective management and clear responsibilities in monitoring between agencies are vital for the ongoing success of tourism development and sustainability of its resources (El-Barmelgy 2002).

3. A lack of diversification in the tourism products. It is estimated that 75% of tourists are attracted to the country by marine and coastal tourism and the rest by the historical attractions of the Nile Valley and the Pharaonic monuments (Hilmi et al. 2012). Although Egypt has a unique natural and cultural potential, the state does not have any long-term vision to expand its tourism products (EC-1).

4. The offering of low prices compared with other destinations in the Middle East was designed to attract more tourists; however, the tourists who have been attracted are seen as cheap and low quality. They also do not spend much money outside of the hotels. Therefore, they have little impact on the Egyptian economy more generally (Chemonics 2006a).

Furthermore, there are other external pressures that threaten the Egyptian tourism product. These include:

1. The influence of foreign organisations in controlling tourism development: The majority of the tourism products in Egypt, as in most developing counties, are owned or controlled by foreign organisations such as airlines and tourism agencies. These organisations have the authority to define which tourist packages can go to specific destinations as well as influence decision-making through the terms of contractual arrangement. (Helmy 1999). It is therefore very difficult to identify and organise tourist demand in the developing countries without recognising this external influence.

2. There are a significant number of competitor countries trying to expand their markets and capture some of the Egyptian tourism market. Egypt needs to develop an appropriate plan for marketing its product to diversify its customers and thereby maintain, and hopefully, expand its market share (Rady & TDA 2002).

3. Changes in the origin of tourists represent a big challenge to tourism resources and products. Until 2006, Europe was the dominant source of tourists. Since then, the Russian market has become important, providing more than 20% of the total international tourists in 2010. This change has led to a decrease in the benefits of tourism and an increase in environmental degradation because the Russians are less sensitive about natural resources and have lower levels of expenditure (EC-2). Therefore, Egypt should seek to maximise the premium markets to increase visits from Western Europeans (Chemonics 2006a).

Furthermore, political insecurity both within the country and the region more generally, has, and is having a significant impact on tourism markets and potential new development. Security restrictions are one of the most important challenges to tourism development in Egypt. As a result of attacks on tourists, or at tourist destinations, security measures have been tightened. All tourist tours are now accompanied by police but then the tourists experiences can be hampered by intrusive police. Military permits required for safari tours have increased the complication of this problem. This has led a significant number of tourists cancelling. So, Egypt needs to promote its security system's ability to protect tourists through developing a security service that can respond quickly without being intrusive (CISS & EDG 2012). Furthermore, the Middle East more generally is one of the most unstable areas in the whole world. This inevitably leads to fluctuations and instability for tourism development in Egypt. For example, in the last two decades there have been many troubles, both internal and external, that have led to a decline in the number of tourists, such as the Gulf War in 1991 and terrorism incidents in 1993 and 1997. Moreover, the unstable relations between Palestine and Israel add to the tension. More recently, an unstable internal political situation within Egypt since the 25th January

Revolution in 2011 has also affected the Egyptian tourism market. Figure (4-8) demonstrates dramatically what the impact of internal and regional pressures on the Egyptian tourism industry have been (CAPMAS 2014; Rady & TDA 2002).

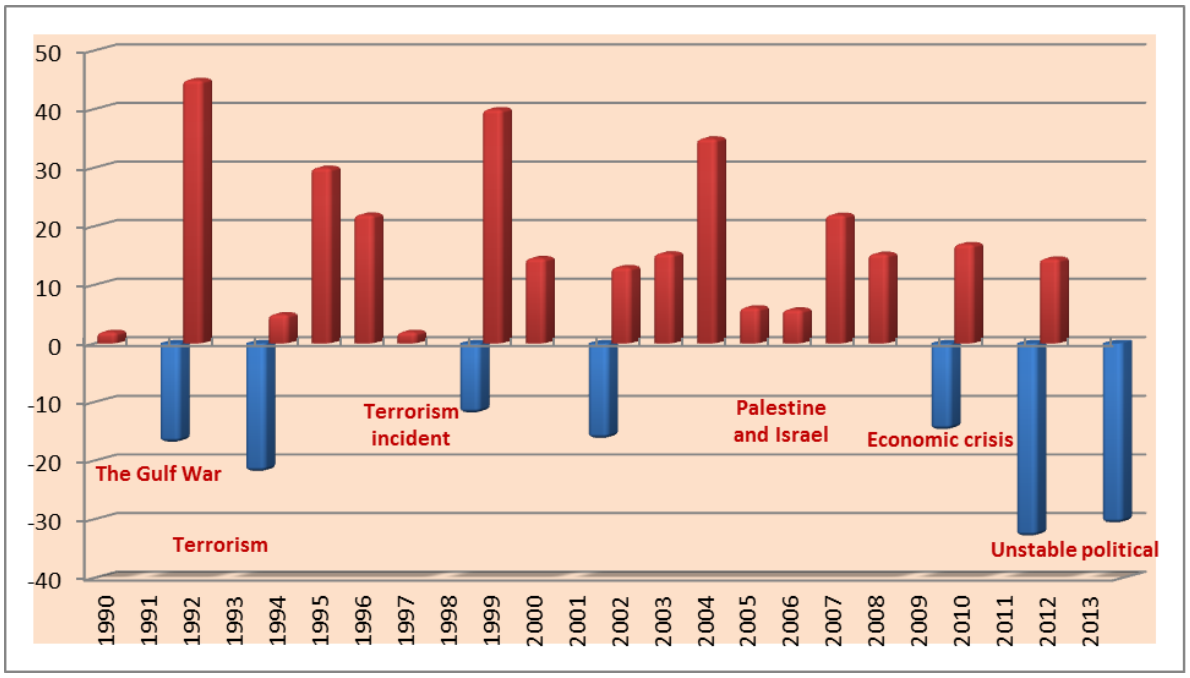


Figure (4-8) The fluctuation in tourism development as a result of internal and external troubles
Source: The author based on data of MOT and El-Barmelgy (2002)

Consequently, despite its importance to the national economy, tourism in Egypt is an unstable industry, externally controlled, affected by international tourism operators, and very vulnerable, not only to internal political instability but also that of the entire region. Egypt therefore needs a new approach to try to mitigate these challenges and aim for more sustainable development. This might include:

- *Supporting traditional tourism products:* The value of existing tourism products should be maintained and the facilities of each tourism resource improved (JICA 2000).

- *Developing new tourism products:* The development of new tourism offerings by diversifying the nature and location of tourism activities would be beneficial. This could be in the form of ecotourism development (new approaches) in the desert areas, the North-West Coast of the Mediterranean (new location), etc. (Rady & TDA 2002; TDA et al. 2009).

- *Integration of tourism products:* The integration between different tourism products is seen as one of the most effective ways to diversify the tourism

offer. Each product can supplement other products to produce a new one, by combining the attractiveness of each. For example, Nile cruise, historical archaeology of the Upper Nile Region and marine tourism in the Red Sea region could be better integrated to offer a mutual support and benefit to the three regions together (JICA 2000; TDA et al. 2009).

- *Enhancing the planning approach:* To produce effective tourism development through those three approaches outlined above there is a need for all stakeholders to be involved, with the state, in planning and implementing the plans because no single actor can solve such complex and dynamic issues, as mentioned above. A more collaborative planning approach could create an effective partnership between the state and other tourism stakeholders (Bonilla 2008; EC-2 and EC-8).

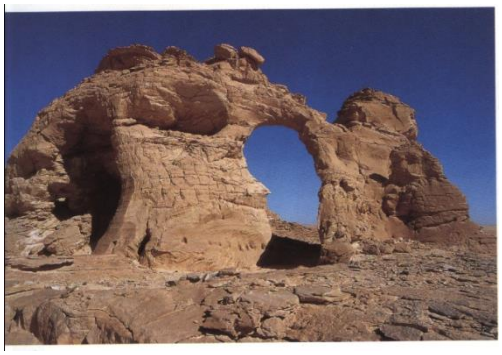
Now the research will turn to define the main potential for ecotourism development in Egypt.

4.2.2 Ecotourism development potential in Egypt

Owing to the challenges and problems facing Egyptian tourism development and a decline in Egypt's tourism position worldwide, the expansion of tourism products through ecotourism development has been seen as an opportunity, especially as Egypt has unique potential, comprising an incomparable natural, cultural, man-made heritage and historical archaeology. Egypt has a multitude of unique ecosystems and natural attractions not found elsewhere in the world. These can be classified into four potential ecosystem zones.

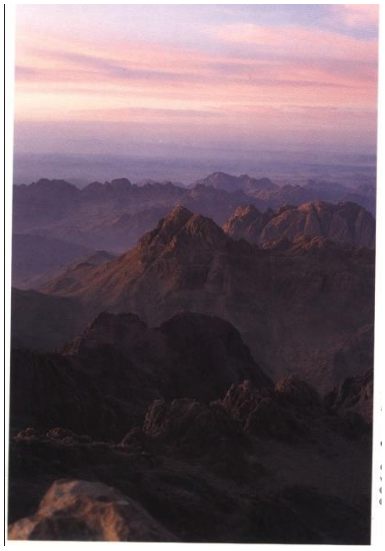
First the desert ecosystem represents more than 92% of the area of Egypt, and is divided into three main parts: Western Desert, Eastern Desert and Sinai Peninsula. These deserts are characterised by their unique oases, marvellous mountains and unimaginably beautiful valleys (EEAA 2007) (see Figure 4-9). In addition, they offer an incredible mixture of unique biodiversity and cultural diversity.

Black desert



Sugar Loaf Hill

Examples of Western Desert features



The Red Sea Mountains as an example of Eastern Desert features

St. Catherine Mountain as an example of the Sinai Peninsula features

Figure (4-9) Desert ecosystem features

Source: Khalil and Ali (2000)

Secondly marine and coastal ecosystems can be found in the Red Sea and the Mediterranean Sea. The Red Sea represents the eastern borders of the country and has a coastal length of 1,850 km. The Red Sea includes biodiversity reserves with unique species such as coral reefs and mangroves, which act as natural barriers against storms, wave erosion and other natural threats. It includes 3,800 km^2 of the most

diverse coral reef ecosystems on earth, containing many different kinds of hard and soft coral (Figure 4-10) and 1,000 species of fish (EEAA & MSEA 2010). The coral reef ecosystems have provided significant income to the Egyptian economy as a result of the country's close proximity to millions of European tourists who are interested in experiencing the reefs through diving and snorkelling (Cesar 2003). Within the RS there are about 45 islands, 22 of which have been declared protected areas by the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA) (TDA, USAID & Ressti 2004). The Mediterranean Sea represents the northern border of Egypt and it extends for nearly 1,150 km. The Mediterranean Sea coast has the potential for promoting quality tourism products, due to the mild weather all year round, abundant sunlight and adequate rainfall and moisture. This area is characterised by unique flora and fauna together with beautiful white sand and crystal-blue water. Despite its natural potential, this region has not yet begun to realise its tourism potential (El-Barmelgy 2002).

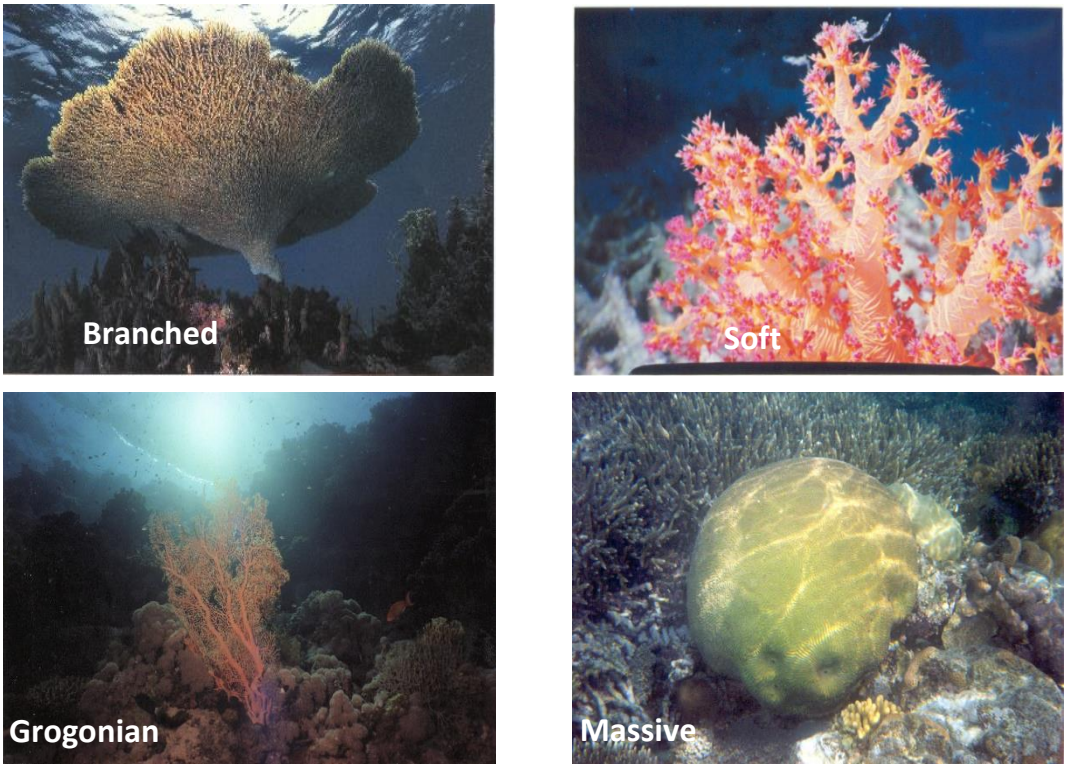


Figure (4-10) Examples of Red Sea coral reefs
Source: EEAA and NCS (2001)

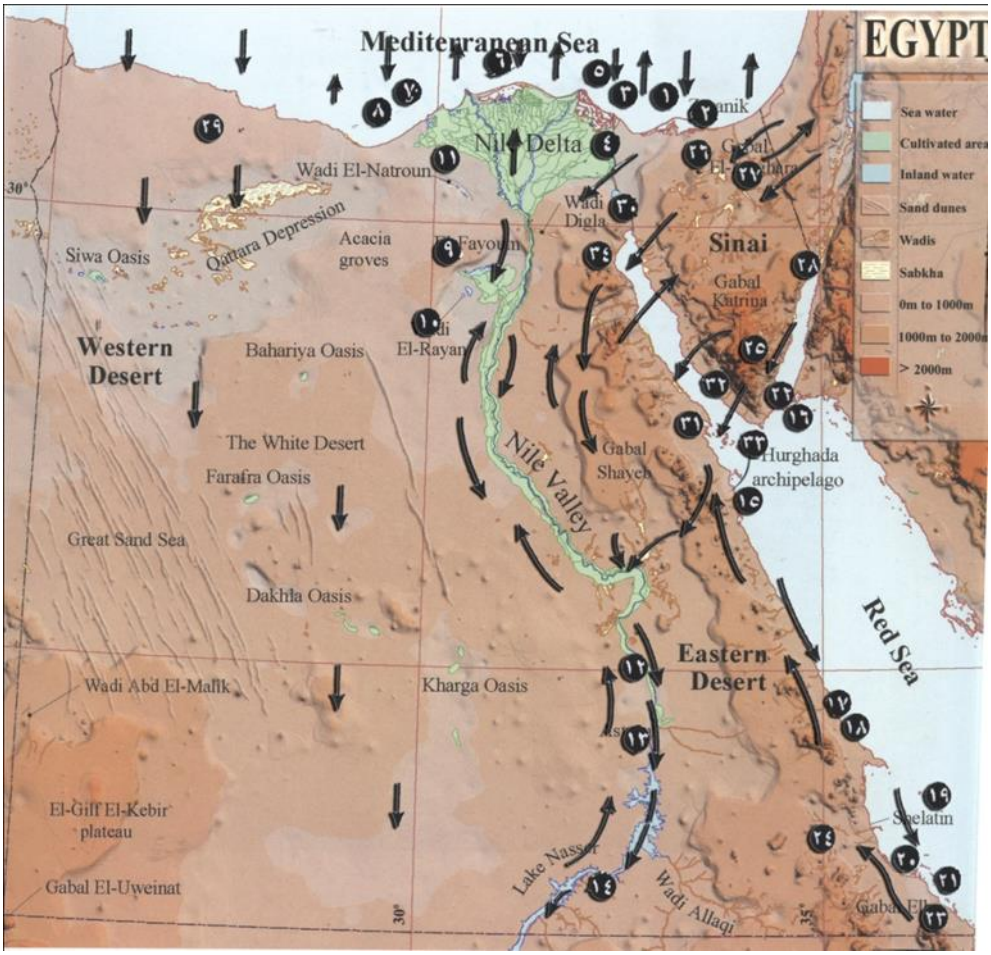
Thirdly wetland ecosystems provide ecological and biological functions to maintain the environmental balance, such as water purification, climate change mitigation and reserves of biodiversity. Many have international significance for

resident and migratory birds. For migratory birds, the wetlands are resting and feeding places for their annual migration to central Africa (see Figure 4-11). The Egyptian wetlands also produce around 39% of Egyptian fish production (Ramsar, EEAA & MSEA 2009). Although these ecosystems have potential, they are subject to many threats such as pollution, coastal incursion, sedimentation, over-fishing and over-hunting. Therefore, planning for sustainable ecotourism development is essential to protect these wetland habitats (Fishpool & Evans 2001; Ramsar, EEAA & MSEA 2009).

Finally, there is the Nile Valley and Delta: The Nile River extends for about 1,530 km within Egypt (EEAA & MSEA 2008). The Nile Valley is divided into two main parts: the northern part of the valley is Lower Egypt, extending from north Cairo to the Mediterranean Sea. The Nile splits into two branches which constitute the Delta, with its great V-shape. Upper Egypt extends from south of Cairo to the Sudanese border. The Nile Valley and Delta area has much potential and many attractions for ecotourism, such as vast rural areas, and its variety and the unique culture and way of life of the communities can attract rural tourism. The Nile river cruises are one of the most distinctive tourism products in Egypt, attracting all segments of the tourism market (JICA 2000).

Additionally, within these broad regions outlined above the state has identified and designated the most important as protected areas according to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition[23]. To date, Egypt has declared 29 protected areas, representing about 15% of the total area of the country. It has been proposed that the number of protected areas will increase to about 40, covering 20% of Egyptian territory, by 2017 (Figure 4-12). However, only 18 from the existing protected areas are suitable for international designation and the EEAA is preparing the others to meet these criteria. Furthermore, as Table 4-3 illustrates, all 18 protected areas are appropriate for either hard or soft ecotourism (both characteristics discussed in Chapter Two). The state could use them as a first step in boosting ecotourism development in Egypt (MSEA & EEAA 2005).

[23] A protected area is *"any area of land or coastal or inland water characterised by special flora, fauna and natural features having cultural, scientific, tourism or aesthetic value"* (IUCN et al. 2006, p. 4)



1. Bardawil Lake	10. Wadi El Rayan	19. Zabargad Island	28. Wadi Gerafi
2. Zaranik	11. Wadi El Naturn	20. Siyal Islands	29. El Qasr Desert
3. El Malaha	12. Upper Nile	21. Rawabel Islands	30. Suez
4. Bitter Lakes	13. Aswan Reservoir	22. Nabaq	31. Gabel El Zeit
5. Manzalla Lake	14. Nasser Lake	23. Gabel Elba	32. El Qa Plain
6. Burullus Lake	15. Hurghada Archipelago	24. The Abraq Area	33. Ras Mohammed
7. Idku Lake	16. Tiran Island	25. St. Katherine	34. Ain Sukhna
8. Maryut Lake	17. Wadi Gimal Island	26. Gabel Maghara	
9. Qarun Lake	18. Qulan Island	27. Quseima	

Figure (4-11) Important Bird Areas (IBAs) and the migration routes of birds in Egypt
Source: The author based on EEAA (2011); Fishpool and Evans (2001)

Table (4-3) The protected areas according to the international designation and their appropriateness to ecotourism patterns

The international designation	Soft ecotourism	Hard ecotourism	Protectorate name
strict nature reserve (Ia)	☐	■	Ahrash
wilderness area (Ib)	☐	■	Wadi Degla
national park (II)	■	■	Ras Mohamed, Elba, St. Catherine', Taba
natural monument (III)	■	■	Sannur Cave
habitat/species management area (IV)	--	--	--
protected landscape/seascape (V)	■	☐	Ashtum El Gamil, Burullus Lake, Wadi Alaqi, El Omayed, Zaranik, Qarun Lake, Petrified Forest, Saluga and Ghazal and Wadi El Assuti
management resource protected area (VI)	■	☐	Nabq, Abu Galum

Source: The author based on EEAA (2005) and Stephen (2002)

■ Appropriate ☐ Not Appropriate

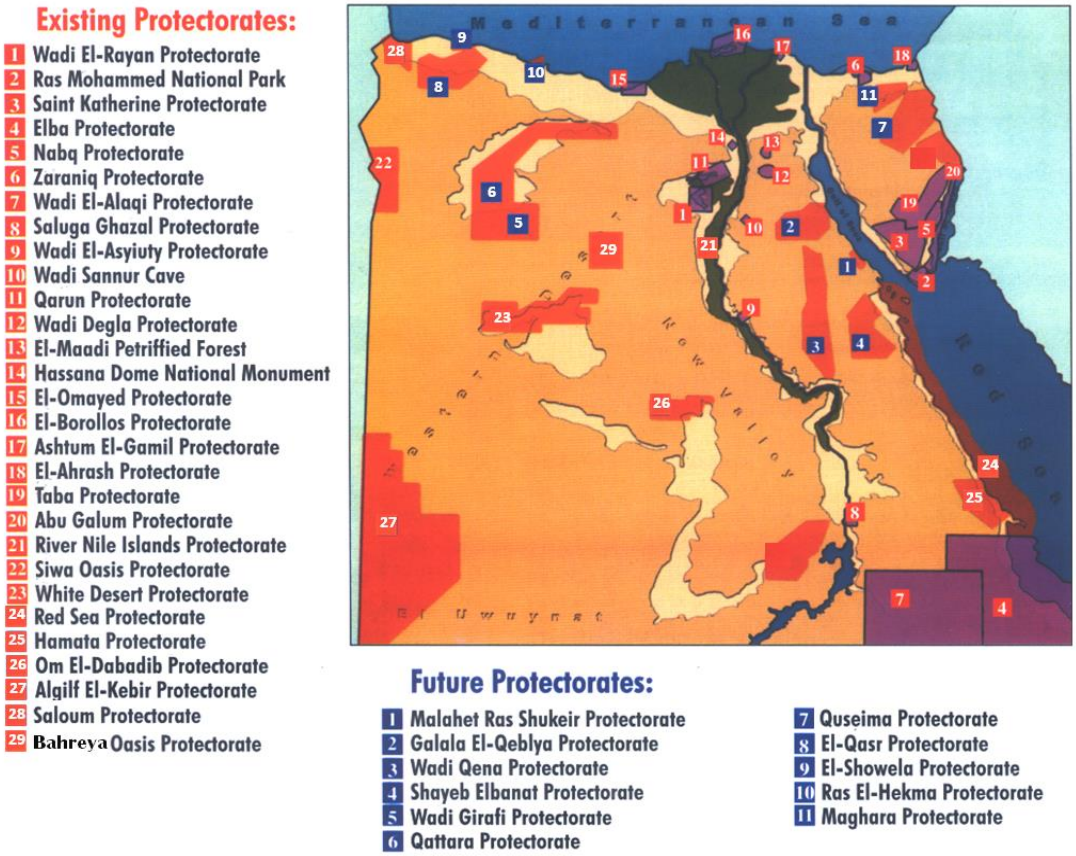


Figure (4-12) Existing and future protectorates networks in Egypt
Source: The author based on Kenawy (2005), MSEA and EEAA (2005)

4.2.3 Ecotourism development institutions

This section is designed to identify the main governmental institutions that are concerned with ecotourism development.

Ecotourism development has two main pillars, tourism and the environment. The governmental institutions in Egypt that are concerned with both elements can be divided into two main categories (see Figure 4-13). The first group is tourism agencies and includes the Supreme Council of Tourism (SCT), and the Ministry of Tourism (MOT) and its units – Egyptian Tourist Authority (ETA) and Tourism Development Authority (TDA). The second group is the environmental agencies and encompasses the Ministry of State for Environmental Affairs (MSEA) and its executive arm, the Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA). The following section seeks to describe the role and functions of these agencies, identifying overlapping competences and offering ideas as to how their activities could be better integrated to promote ecotourism development. The research begins by describing the key governmental tourism agencies followed by the key environmental institutions.

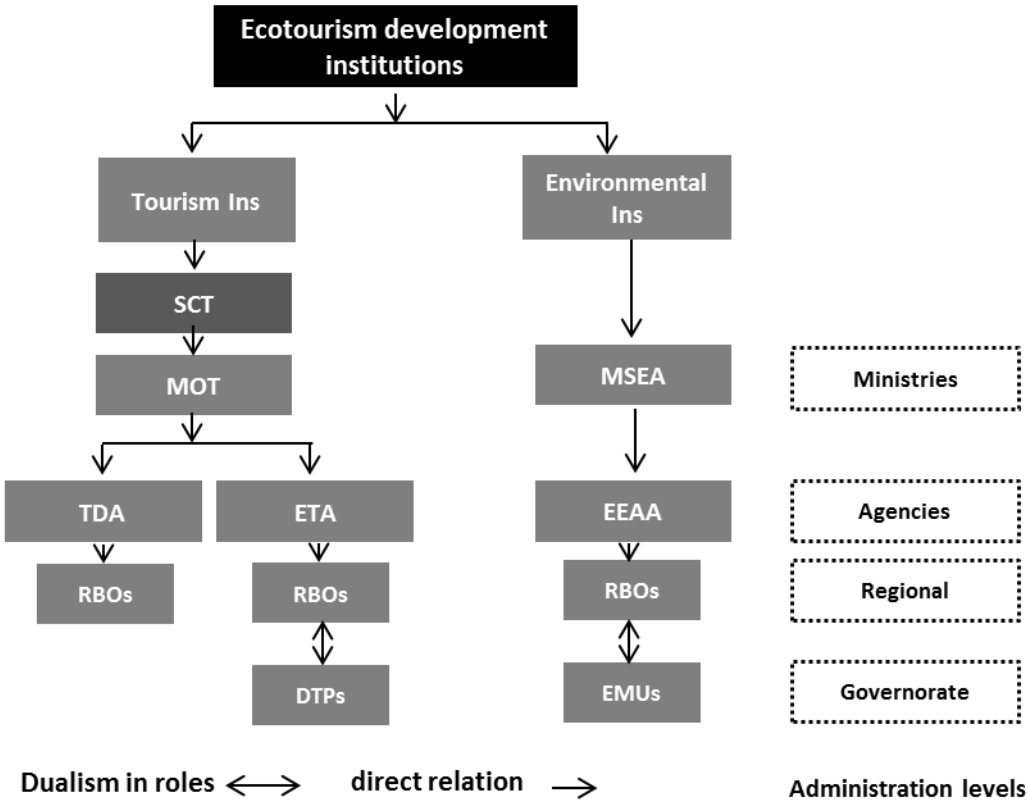


Figure (4-13) Ecotourism development institutions in Egypt
Source: The author

Supreme Council of Tourism (SCT) was established according to a Presidential Decree in 1975. It aims to coordinate different Ministries in the implementation of development plans and specify the role of each Ministry in boosting tourism, as well as removing all the constraints hindering tourism development (Elquisoni 2012). The Council sessions are held under the presidency of the Prime Minister, and the membership of this Council comprises the Heads of the Ministries and the authorities whose tasks interact and integrate with tourism activities (Helmy 1999; TDA et al. 2009). The SCT is theoretically considered to be a broad authority, and should be an effective body for coping with cross-ministerial issues. Although the SCT has the power to pass decrees concerning tourism development, which should be applied and implemented by all other ministries and agencies, it has been unsuccessful in this role. It has been reorganised several times (the last time was in 2005) in an attempt to try and ensure it can better fulfil its functions. But these changes have not been successful (TDA et al. 2009). An interviewee suggested that SCT could become more effective by establishing a Project Panel Committee (planning and implementation unit) which included all the stakeholders and key experts to provide co-ordination between the different ministries and authorities for each project (EC-20).

Ministry of Tourism (MOT) is the official national institution for planning, promoting and developing tourism activities in Egypt. It has the following responsibilities:

- To enable the private sector to be involved and invest in tourism development;
- To protect the natural and man-made resources;
- To boost sustainable tourism development;
- To ensure the best possible quality of the tourism product through guidance and control;
- To ensure the development of the required tourism regulations and legislation; and
- To draw up the future strategies for developing and promoting tourism (El-Barmelgy 2002).

The MOT fulfils its promotional responsibilities directly through the ETA, and shares, with the TDA, tourism related developmental and regulatory responsibilities

(TDA et al. 2009). However, the MOT's role in the development of ecotourism more specifically is not satisfactory as it has tended to focus more on mass tourism products (EC-1). The national strategic plan for sustainable tourism development, which was prepared in 2009, suggested that to modify and enhance MOT's responsibilities:

- It should focus on policy, strategy and monitoring, leaving implementation to its agencies;
- Better control of its agencies could be achieved by setting targets and monitoring performance; and
- It should take responsibility for the regulation of tourism businesses and the coordination of the efforts of the public and private sectors (TDA et al. 2009).

Egyptian Tourism Authority (ETA): The main objective of the ETA is the promotion of tourism both externally and internally by devising and delivering world-class marketing programmes. It has established permanent offices around the world to provide help and guidance to foreign tourism agents and operators (El-Barmelgy 2002). It has been mandated, according to Presidential Decree No. 134, as being responsible for:

- Evaluating Egyptian tourism products;
- Setting up programmes for tourism promotion (domestic and international); and
- Providing technical and marketing assistance and cooperating with the other tourist authorities in terms of tourism promotion.

The ETA's objective is to increase international tourism revenue via cooperation with national and international tour operators, and accommodation providers, etc. Therefore, the ETA should cooperate with all the tourism development stakeholders to modify tourism products according to global trends (TDA *et al.* 2009). The ETA has Regional Branch Offices (RBOs) in the main Governorates with high levels of international tourism demand notably the Red Sea, Fayoum and New Valley. These RBOs have been mandated to:

- Supervise all of the promotional events and oversee their implementation; and
- Follow up the implementation of ETA recommendations.

Governorates with a large tourism offering also have their own Departments of Tourism Promotion (DTP) which are under supervision of the Governors. Their roles include:

- Licensing tourism activities in the Governorates;
- Organising regular meetings between the Governor and representatives of the MOT to mitigate the problems in tourism activities; and
- Organising events to promote their Governorate tourism (Governorate 2013).

Consequently, there is duplication and conflict between RBO and DTP functions. Some think it would be better to merge both in one unit, under the supervision of the Governors, to reduce centralisation and speed up decision-making, thereby helping to motivate the private sector to invest (EC-5). Moreover, these new units could establish local tourism information offices, and promote domestic tourism, enabling the ETA to focus on its core international marketing role (EC-6).

Tourism Development Authority (TDA) was established in 1991 and mandated as being responsible for:

- Development planning of tourism regions;
- Implementing infrastructure in tourism regions;
- Allocating land within the tourism zones, including selling, leasing and granting rights of use;
- Supervising the execution of development plans;
- Promoting private sector involvement in tourism investment opportunities;
- Increasing the coordination between authorities such as the Ministry of Petrol, Ministry of Military and the environmental authorities, to avoid the conflicts between their plans; and
- Setting guidelines for construction and running the tourism activities.

Unfortunately, there have been deficiencies in the way the TDA has exercised its responsibilities. These include: i) selling tourism development areas for \$1 per m^2 to speed up construction; ii) becoming involved in other activities on behalf of the MOT, including preparing tourism development plans for land located only in its jurisdiction, while leaving the other touristic areas to Governorates that have no ability or experience (EC-20); and iii) being unclear about the responsibility for monitoring

and improving the quality of the tourism products. These responsibilities fall between the MOT, the TDA, Governorates, municipalities and other ministries and agencies.

In order to mitigate these issues, the TDA and its RBOs should plan all tourism activities with the involvement all of the relevant stakeholders. The Governorates should be mandated for monitoring the implementation of and running the tourism activities (TDA et al. 2009).

Turning towards the Egyptian government's environmental agencies, these include:

The Egyptian Environmental Affairs Agency (EEAA)[24] was mandated, according to the Environmental Law 4/1994, as being responsible for protecting and promoting the environment. Its primary role is the implementation of national environmental plans by coordinating activities with competent administrative authorities (EEAA 2013). According to the organisational structure of the EEAA, there are two important departments that should be involved in development planning for ecotourism:

- The Nature Protection Department, which is concerned with the maintenance and promotion of protected areas; and
- The Environmental Management Department, which is concerned with environmental assessment for tourism development before, during and after implementation, to ensure the integrity of the environment assets is maintained.

The EEAA has adopted a decentralisation strategy for environmental management by establishing eight Regional Branch Offices (RBOs), one in each economic region[25] and two in the Delta, because it is such a huge region. Each RBO is authorised to practise the powers and authority of the EEAA.

The RBOs are mandated by Ministerial Decree No. 56 (2000) to:

[24] This research focuses on the EEAA only for the environmental institutions because it is seen as the main agency that should be involved in ecotourism development.

[25] Egypt was divided into seven economic regions, namely, Greater Cairo, Alexandria, Suez Canal, Delta, Assiut, North Upper Egypt and South Upper Egypt.

- Prepare environmental status studies for each Governorate, and provide the central EEAA with the information that is considered the necessary basis for the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) (Ibrahim 2010);
- Ensure the implementation of environmental law and executive regulations, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders, particularly civil society (Hegazy 2010); and
- Raise environmental awareness, at Governorate and local levels, including the activities of coordinating with the regional universities and research centres (EEAA 2013).

In addition, each Governorate also its own Environmental Management Unit (EMU) which is responsible for:

- Following up the implementation of environmental regulations at a local level;
- Preparing environmental status studies for each Governorate and providing the central EEAA with information that can be considered necessary for the National Environmental Action Plan (NEAP) (the same function as the EEAA RBOs);
- Participating with the EEAA in examining EIA studies and following up the implementation of any environmental conditions.

Consequently, EMUs administratively follow the governor, and thus are under the supervision of the local development minister. The affiliation of RBOs and EMUs to different Ministries has led to a weakening of their communication and integration. This has resulted in confusion and duplication in the environmental projects and confusion as to which agency is responsible for following up the environmental situation. Thus, the RBOs and EMUs could be merged into one unit under the supervision of a governor. This would reduce centralisation and remove duplication of tasks and make it clear who is responsible for the implementation of the environmental regulations (PS-10).

Table (4-4) The deficiency in governmental institutions' responsibilities and recommendations for activating them

	Deficiency in responsibilities	Recommendation for activation
SCT	Repeated failure to become fully operable and effective in its roles	SCT can be activated by establishing a Project Panel Committee that includes all the stakeholders and key experts to coordinate between the different Ministries and authorities for each project
MOT	Duplication and conflict, in the responsibility for planning, protecting and improving the integrity of the tourism products, with the TDA, Governorates, municipalities and other Ministries.	- MOT should focus on policy, strategy and monitoring, leaving implementation to its agencies - Better control of its agencies could be achieved by setting targets and monitoring performance
ETA	Duplication and conflict in functions and roles between RBOs and DTP functions.	- Merge both in one unit, under supervision of the Governors, to reduce centralisation and speed up the decision-making. - These new units could establish local tourism information offices for promotion of domestic tourism, and enable the ETA to focus on the core international marketing role.
TDA	- TDA focused on selling tourism development areas for \$1 per m^2 to speed up their construction; - It is involved in other activities on behalf of the MOT, including preparing tourism development plans for land located only in its jurisdiction, while leaving the other touristic areas to Governorates that have no ability or experience; - Unclear responsibility for monitoring and improving the quality of the tourism products, which falls between the MOT, the TDA, Governorates, municipalities and other Ministries.	- The TDA and its RBOs should be only responsible for planning all areas of tourism through involvement of the relevant stakeholder(s) - The Governorates should be mandated for monitoring the implementation of and running the tourism activities
EEAA	Duplication and conflict in functions and roles between RBOs and EMUs.	Merge both in one unit under supervision of the Governors in order to reduce the centralisation and remove duplication of tasks and make it clear who is responsible for the implementation of the environmental regulations.

Source: The author

Synthesis

Egypt has two main groups of governmental institutions that are concerned with ecotourism development. The first group, tourism organisations, encompasses the SCT and the MOT with its two arms (ETA and TDA). The second group is the EEAA, the executive arm of the MSEA. Unfortunately, there is conflict between them

and they duplicate functions. For example, the TDA and the EEAA[26] have shared responsibility for examining Environmental impact assessment statement for tourism projects with the Governorates. This has led to investors exploiting the unclear responsibility in order to evade regulations (this point will be further developed in Chapter Six). The research has proposed some recommendations for dealing with these concerns based on interviewees with various experts (see Table 4-4).

4.3 Planning system in Egypt

The planning system refers to the methods or approaches of managing development, to protect the resources (natural, social and heritage) and improve the existing situation. Planning systems vary from one country to another according to their planning regulations. This section aims to explain the Egyptian planning system through three main parts: the evolution of the planning approach, planning at different governmental levels, and planning system regulations and institutions.

The planning system in Egypt, as in most developing countries, can be characterised as top-down whereby the state adopts full control of the planning process through centralised planning institutions. These have the upper hand in decision-making, in order to achieve nationally determined goals and policies (Shalaby 2012). Limited responsibility, if any, is given to the regional and local governments (El-Barmelgy 2002). Although there have been many state initiatives designed at least theoretically to try and transfer power to a more decentralised planning system (bottom-up process), they have all failed. This is due to the budget still being controlled in a top-down manner and the creation of hybrid intergovernmental structures. This has led to more duplication and conflicts between agencies. Local government offices have been given responsibilities but without any decision-making power or budgetary responsibility (Loughlin & Nada 2012). Furthermore, the deficiencies in the institutional planning system have been attributed to a separation of economic planning from spatial planning in different institutions, the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MPIC) and GOPP

[26]The TDA and EEAA RBOs and governorates follow up the implementation of touristic projects according to environmental regulations and each one reports to the head EIA office in the EEAA.

respectively. They base their planning decisions on different sets of regulations[27]. This means that the economic and spatial planning plans have not been combined to create one comprehensive national plan for development in Egypt (MPIC 2012). Furthermore, none of the proposed spatial plans and projects have ever been given any budget for implementation.

4.3.1 The planning approach evolution in Egypt

The evolution of the Egyptian planning approach can be divided into two main phases: a comprehensive (traditional) planning approach before 2006, and, since 2006, a strategic planning approach.

The comprehensive planning method was the most popular method until the end of 2005. It was based on the old Planning Law No. 03/1983[28]. This approach put forward inclusive objectives, and then tried to achieve comprehensive solutions through the planning process. However, it was difficult to utilise a comprehensive solution to achieve all governmental objectives simultaneously. This is what actually happened to the vast majority of spatial plans developed during this phase. They were technically rational but encountered considerable difficulty in implementation. Moreover, using the comprehensive planning approach led to much waste of resources, effort, time and money in gathering all the information about the community or area and then trying to formulate comprehensive planning solutions (Shalaby 2012). The master plan, which is considered to be the technical product of the comprehensive planning model, is a static product, unable to keep up with the changes occurring in the Egyptian context. Thus, comprehensive development goals and solutions are not required, but rather the Egyptian planning context needs incremental targets that it can access easily and effectively to create real development on the ground (Bayoumy 2007).

In preparing the plans, the national government remained the main actor in control of the planning process in Egypt (Table 4-5). As the central authority, it

[27] The legal basis for planning in Egypt stems from two different key laws: the Planning Law no. 70/1973, which regulates the process of developing the national socio-economic plan; and the Building Law no. 119/2008, which regulates the process of strategic planning at different levels.
[28] It was changed with the Building Law No 119/2008.

formulated the plans (through GOPP or TDA), organised the planning work, and determined the technical product of the planning process, in order to achieve government objectives within the national policy framework. Thus, the central government dominated the whole planning process until the middle of the 1990s (Bayoumy 2007). Then the state moved towards using a central-oriented method to manage the planning process through joint technical planning teams and governmental consulting centres to prepare highly technical plans without the participation of either the private sector or local people in the planning process (Shalaby 2012).

The comprehensive approaches to spatial planning largely failed to provide plans commensurate with the continuously changing governance in Egypt (Hassan, Hefnawi & Refaie 2011). The strategic planning approach was used to mitigate these comprehensive deficiencies with the preparation of the Strategic Urban Planning for Small Cities (SUPSC) in 2006. The SUPSC is considered to be the main reason for the preparation of a new spatial planning law (Building Law in 2008). This law included obliging the state to put forward a national framework and the governmental bodies to carry out strategic planning for the Egyptian areas within this frame (Shalaby 2012). The strategic approach is based on an ever-evolving vision, rather than being static, according to the SWOT analysis for existing situations. Furthermore, the strategic planning steps are intertwined and flexible to allow the path, in any phase of planning process, to be corrected and enhanced because they incorporate a continuous process of survey and analysis (Bayoumy 2007).

During this period, the state tried to prepare strategic plans based on the views of the technical planning teams in consultation with the stakeholders[29] through two workshops: one in the pre-planning stage to explain the aim and objectives of the project (the public did not share in determining the objectives); and the second at the end of the planning stage, to discuss the proposed activities within the spatial boundaries of the plan (Haez).[30] After the Building Law was issued in 2008, Egypt focused on widening the role of public participation in strategic planning, with GOPP

[29] The author has experience of being involved as a team leader of a consultation office in preparing about 100 strategic plans for villages and cities (2006-2010).

[30] Haez's outline encompasses the added and existing area of the villages or cities where the law criminalises building outside this outline after adopting it.

changing its Terms Of Reference (TOR) for the strategic planning of the cities and villages. This tried to prevent centralised decision-making and promote public participation in the planning process. But this has remained largely tokenistic (EC-17).

To conclude, until now the Egyptian planning system has been using approaches and models that other countries, throughout the world, were using in the 1960s. This was due to the nature of the Egyptian government, based on centrality in decision-making and state control of the planning process. This context also had a strong influence on delays in adopting strategic planning approaches and public participation until 2006. After 2006, international NGOs tried to apply a strategic rather than a comprehensive planning approach. This was driven by stakeholders or local communities, but has failed largely owing to state policy. Consequently, Egypt needs to transfer from token public participation (the state is manipulating participation) to real participation and inclusion of different stakeholders to increase networks, partnerships, information sharing and practical strategies (Hassan 2010).

Table (4-5) Planning approach evolution in Egypt

The planning system phases	Planning approaches	
	Procedural methods	Roles (who makes/shares in the plan)
First phase: after the 1952 revolution until 2005	Comprehensive planning approach	- Central methods - It was dominated by central authority
		- Central-oriented method Techno-planning team and governmental consulting centres
Second phase: after 2006 until now	Strategic planning approach	- Central-oriented method with limited public participation (before 2008) - Techno-planning team, governmental consulting centres and elected representatives of private sectors.
		- Central-oriented method with public participation (after 2008) - Techno-planning team, governmental consulting centres and elected representatives of private sectors, local communities and NGOs but still the government selects them.

Source: The author

4.3.2 The current planning regulations

Egypt enacted Spatial Planning Law No. 119/2008 to mitigate the weakness in the previous planning regulations because of static master plans which were not appropriate to deal with continuously changing situations and a lack of stakeholder participation during the planning process, which was limited to a public hearing, after

the plans had been proposed. Thus, Law No. 119/2008 sought to promote sustainable spatial development and control of urban growth through an improvement in the institutional, legislative, and technical frameworks at the local, regional and national scales. It was intended to be comprehensive. For example, it adopted the strategic plans and action plans which were intended to consider long-term socio-economic and environmental issues. It focused on more integrated local economic development through, promoting governmental and non-governmental partnerships and stakeholder participation (Government 2008; Hegazy 2010).

Although Law 119/2008 tried to mitigate many previous challenges of centralised planning, it still had some shortcomings. This has led to the majority of the plans not being properly or effectively implemented. According to a study evaluating the effectiveness of this new legislative framework for the planning undertaken by UN-Habitat in conjunction with the MPIC (Loughlin & Nada 2012) the following weaknesses were identified:

- The strategic planning process at the different levels of government is not in harmony with the process of producing sectoral plans from the different line Ministries. Failure to include the strategic planning projects in the Ministries' sectoral annual plans and budgets has led to plans remaining unimplemented. This has contributed to weak stakeholder ownership, including a lack of enthusiasm from local governments to participate in the planning process.
- The Law does not provide any guidance as to how strategic spatial plans can be linked to the state budget.
- Although the Law aimed to promote the involvement of local stakeholders by acknowledging four types (Local Executive Councils, Popular Local Council, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and the private sector) in the process of who defines and agrees with the local needs and priorities, the Law also stipulates that managing the process, including hiring consulting teams and the technical review of the plans, must occur at the central level. This does delay plan approval (Government 2008).

The next section will describe the government institutions that are concerned with spatial planning according to Law 119/2008.

4.3.3 The institutions of the planning system

This section aims to identify the governmental institutions concerned with spatial planning, which will also include many of the key actors involved in ecotourism planning. According to Law 119/2008, there are three main governmental agencies responsible for the planning process:

The Supreme Council for Planning and Urban Development (SCPUD) is headed by the Prime Minister, according to Law No. 119/2008, with membership consisting of ministers and authorities competent in issues regarding spatial development, and includes ten non-government experts specialising in relevant issues (Government 2008). The SCPUD is mandated to: i) adopt general goals and policies for spatial development planning at all levels; ii) coordinate Ministries and bodies concerned with spatial development, including the promotion and implementation of the national strategic plan; iii) suggest and express opinions regarding draft laws pertaining to spatial development; iv) approve strategic spatial plans for national, regional and Governorate development; v) provide the implementation mechanisms and funding resources for all strategic plans at all levels; and vi) evaluate the implementation outcomes of spatial plans at all levels (Government 2008; Loughlin & Nada 2012).

The General Organization of Physical Planning (GOPP) is mandated to: i) develop the national policy for preparing the strategic spatial plans at the different levels; ii) prepare the strategic plans for spatial development at all levels; iii) follow up the implementation of strategic regional and local plans; iv) prepare guidelines for spatial plans and ensure their application; v) develop the capacity building of the spatial planning departments at local levels; vi) develop the implementation mechanisms for the strategic plans at the different levels (Loughlin & Nada 2012); vii) evaluate and update spatial data and indicators in coordination with the information centres at the different levels; and viii) suggest and express opinion regarding the drafting of laws pertaining to spatial development (GOPP 2013a). Furthermore, GOPP has seven Regional Planning Centres (RPCs) for spatial development. Each centre acts as a decentralised arm of GOPP by preparing, implementing and monitoring strategic plans within the regions. The RPCs cooperate with the Governorates and their local

authorities, providing them with the required technical support and assisting in preparing, reviewing and implementing detailed plans (Government 2008; Hegazy 2010). Additionally, in each Governorate there is an urban planning directorate in charge of the implementation of plans and programmes prepared by the GOPP and its RPCs, including taking enforcement action. Each directorate is also responsible for preparing local detailed plans for the area which falls into its Governorate's boundaries, based on the adopted strategic plans (Egypt 2008; GOPP 2013).

The National Centre for Planning State Lands Usage (NCPSLU) was established, according to Presidential Decree No. 153/2001, to promote coordination between the state authorities in order to achieve the best use of the state's land and to ensure plan development was realised and protect state land from unscrupulous development. The Centre is responsible for studying all major national projects in order to guarantee and maximise the revenue through encouraging investment in the desired development (NCPSLU 2013). Furthermore, NCPSLU is mandated to: i) provide an inventory of the lands situated outside Governorate boundaries and prepare a general development plan based on the framework of the national policies in collaboration with the Ministry of Defence; ii) coordinate between Ministries about the land pricing rules and the system of land sales; and iii) harmonise the conflicts between the Ministries and the local administration units about their responsibilities toward development of lands outside Governorate boundaries (Loughlin & Nada 2012; NCPSLU 2013).

4.3.4 The planning system levels in Egypt

According to Law 119/2008, there are three levels of planning activities in Egypt:

- *National Spatial Planning (NSP)* identifies the spatial development objectives and policies for the whole territory of Egypt based on an interpretation of national spatial challenges and problems. This identifies the national projects, their implementation phases (but does not set out detailed actions for implementation), and the responsibilities of the public and private sectors within these phases (Government 2008; Hegazy 2010). GOPP is the responsible authority for formulating the national spatial development plan and

is currently working on the National Spatial Development Vision 2050. Although this should be developed through cooperation with the different Ministries and authorities, conflict and overlap with other national strategic plans including the National Socio-Economic Plan which is prepared by the MPIC (GOPP 2013b) remains a challenge.

- *Regional Spatial Plans (RSPs)* identify the spatial development objectives and policies for each economic region and Governorate within the national development framework. These plans are intended to identify the regional projects and spatial guidelines for land use and infrastructure networks (Government 2008). An RSP identifies the distribution of settlements, their functions, roles and growth potentials within the regions and Governorates. More specifically, they should identify the project proposals, priorities, implementation phases, and the responsibilities of the public and private sectors within these phases. GOPP is responsible for the preparation of the RSPs through its RPCs located in each region (GOPP 2013b; Hegazy 2010).
- *Local Spatial Plans (LSPs).* The planning at this level is concerned with cities and villages. A strategic planning approach was applied for the first time in this level of plans. The plans draw up a future vision for the area and specify the local socio-economic, environmental, and urban development needed to achieve sustainable development. The LSPs then develop action plans, priorities, mechanisms of implementation, and identify sources of finance. According to the Spatial Planning Law 119/2008, the strategic plan should be elaborated with one or more detailed plans for the whole or parts of the area in order to set out detailed land use, guidelines and implementation programmes (Egypt, 2008).

Synthesis

The main reference for the spatial planning in Egypt is Law 119/2008. This identifies three main governmental institutions responsible for the spatial planning process: SCPUD, GOPP and NCPSLU. The Law also identifies three planning levels for spatial development: national, regional and local. Owing to the aforementioned

discussion of spatial planning in Egypt, it can be emphasised that there are various challenges that prevent effective plan preparation and their implementation:

- Law 119/2008 does not provide a relationship between the spatial plan and the state budget, which is prepared by different line Ministries.
- Duplication and overlap in the responsibilities of SCPUD and GOPP concerning implementation mechanisms at all strategic plan levels remains problematic. It would be better if they were clearly allocated functions (EC-15).
- It is difficult for SCPUD to provide the funding resources needed to prepare and implement strategic plans at all levels from the state budget. The SCPUD and GOPP need to coordinate with the MPIC to include spatial plan outcomes within their budgets (Nada 2012; EC-14).
- Responsibility for plan implementation is confusing. The Law assigns implementation of Governorate and local plans to Governorate planning directorates, these institutions do not have the relevant experience or abilities. Although the Law required the GOPP and its RPCs to provide technical support to improve local capabilities, this has not yet occurred. Furthermore, the Law did not assign the implementation responsibilities of the regional plans to any governmental body because the economic regions do not have the administration structure to manage development (EC-17 and EC-15).

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter was designed to provide an understanding of the Egyptian context for ecotourism development. Already it can be concluded that there are challenges impeding effective tourism development in Egypt. This, coupled with increased local competition, which has seen Egypt's share of the regional tourism market shrink, means that new tourism products, including ecotourism, need to be developed with renewed vigour. However, this is challenging because the existing administrative and planning system is characterised by high centralisation and high fragmentation, which leads to enormous duplication and conflicts in responsibilities. In addition, the government is struggling with too many development efforts in many different fields.

If all the relevant public, private and civic society stakeholders involved in tourism development could be engaged in a collaborative manner it may be possible to deliver the tourism strategies mentioned above.

The next part of the research will evaluate how ecotourism development projects in practice have fared in order to shed light on further details of challenges of delivering ecotourism projects in practice in Egypt. The first step in this evaluation will be developing the research methodology and the case study design in Chapter Five.

Chapter Five: Operationalising the research

Chapter Five

Operationalising the research

In chapter three a theoretical framework to evaluate Egyptian ecotourism development planning was developed. This chapter is designed to describe the methodology the research has utilised to examine and evaluate Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives through the lens of this conceptual framework. Operationalising the research can be described in three parts. The first (5.1 and 5.2) explains why a case study approach was chosen as the research strategy. The second part (5.3) focuses on answering how and why the specific case studies for the research were chosen. The final part (5.4) discusses the template for data collection and analysis used in each of the case studies.

5.1 The research strategy

Social science research can be divided into two main different types: quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research is concerned with numerical measurement to quantify how one thing affects another, using statistical methods (Altinay 2008). Qualitative research allows the researcher to describe and investigate issues without numerical relationships. Some researchers combine both types, using qualitative methods at the preliminary stage to describe the depth of an issue, followed by quantitative methods to investigate a phenomenon (Creswell 2009). This research will focus on a non-numerical survey to describe and investigate the issues in development planning in general and ecotourism in particular. The nature of the study is explanatory and exploratory using a number of qualitative techniques to collect the required data.

Qualitative research can be conducted through one or more strategies such as experimentation, survey methods, archival analysis, historical or case studies. The case study is seen as the most flexible research strategy, allowing the research to release the holistic features of a real-life event and provide better understanding of the issues (Creswell 2009; Yin 2009). Additionally, as Yin (2014) has indicated, a case study is the preferred strategy when the research focuses on a contemporary issue within a real-life context. A case study strategy provides a richly detailed story about a

specific situation or event in the workplace through describing who, what, where, when and how (Clardy 1997). This research investigates a contemporary social phenomenon in a real-life context where it attempts to analyse and evaluate ecotourism development planning and clarify its potentials and constraints in order to develop a practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning (CEP), which will enhance the implementation of ecotourism in particular and, more generically, development plans. The main question to be answered is, "How can the collaborative approach be merged and operationalised in the regional ecotourism planning process in Egypt within the context of government fragmentation and the multiplicity of stakeholder interests?" Consequently, a case study approach is the most appropriate strategy for this research. Furthermore, multiple cases will be used to maximise the reliability and validity of the data (Altinay 2008).

5.2 The case study procedures

The design of the case study has been processed through three sequential stages, as Figure (5-1) shows. A multi-method approach is used to provide rich opportunities to validate the research procedures and findings as follows:

Monitoring the problems

The first stage of the research is designed to examine the rationale of the research problem through reviewing the available literature concerned with the process of making development plans as well as the main reasons for their implementation failures. The research problem specifically was realised from semi-structured interviews with nine key experts and consultants in development planning. These were conducted as an informal survey during June and July 2011. This aimed to identify the key factors impeding the implementation of plans within the Egyptian context. Although this discussion was conducted by telephone and Skype, it proved invaluable for identifying the problems and redefining the research focus. The interviews varied in length from 30 minutes to one hour. Three interviewees were involved twice to help finalise the list of critical factors. The discussion centred around three main questions: What are the key factors impeding the implementation of plans in Egypt? Can these factors be ranked in order of importance? How can the plan

implementation be improved? Ten key factors were identified as impeding plan implementation, and most of the interviewees emphasised the importance of enhancing the planning process through participation and collaboration of the relevant stakeholders, and the key positive contribution that this could make. Such a collaborative process also could help commit financial resources for implementation from the stakeholders themselves or enable them to seek other resources so that plan implementation which meets their needs could be achieved. The first chapter suggested that these problems can be clearly demonstrated with reference to ecotourism planning, because such plans are being developed in highly sensitive regions, both environmentally and culturally, and there is a wide spectrum of stakeholders who are affected and influenced by any ecotourism development. In addition, ecotourism development planning is a complex issue. No single actor has all the knowledge and information required to resolve an issue (Kenawy & Shaw 2014).

At the end of this stage, during the theoretical chapters the research developed an idealised conceptual framework for enhancing the planning process of ecotourism development through a collaborative approach (Chapter Three) based on the outcomes of Chapter Two, which was concerned with critically reviewing the requirements of ecotourism development, and where the potential of collaborative planning to address these requirements was highlighted.

Evaluation and comparison

This stage is seen as one of the most important benefits of using a case study. It was aimed at achieving the third research objective. It was designed to evaluate and compare the Egyptian initiatives of ecotourism development through the lens of the conceptual framework to identify the actual gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement in current planning processes and any barriers that may have hindered effective stakeholder participation. This evaluation and comparison took place through a number of multiple steps:

i) Updating general knowledge on the development planning process of the ecotourism initiatives, identifying relevant stakeholder groups and their roles during this process. This was achieved by reviewing the documents of the cases and first phase interviews.

ii) Identifying the challenges in the administrative systems, planning systems, and planning regulations related to stakeholder involvement and collaboration during the development process. This was achieved by a number of informal visits to the governmental bodies and participating in a roundtable[31] discussion.

iii) Evaluating the planning process and the stakeholder involvement of the selected case studies (as shown in sections 5.3 and 5.4) using the conceptual framework as a benchmark enabled a more practical framework to be proposed for collaborative ecotourism planning according to Egyptian circumstance. This step was tested through semi-structured interviews with a group of key experts, consultants and selected stakeholders – some had direct knowledge of the case studies and others were totally independent.

Feedback

The final stage of the case study design provided the opportunity to adapt the outcomes from the previous stages in order to finalise the findings and results. For example, initial feedback from discussing and analysing the evolution of the collaborative planning models resulted in a revisiting of the three-phase model to make it more efficient and appropriate for application in developing countries. A second feedback resulted from analysing the different attempts to identify key factors for achieving successful collaboration in order to build the theoretical framework provided in Chapter Three. The final feedback reflected on the case studies' findings and the proposed recommendations for enhancing the ecotourism planning process in Egypt.

[31] The author was involved in a roundtable discussion, which was held in FURP at 29/11/2012, entitled 'promoting of regional planning and administration structure' under the auspices of UN-HABITAT, FURP and Cairo University

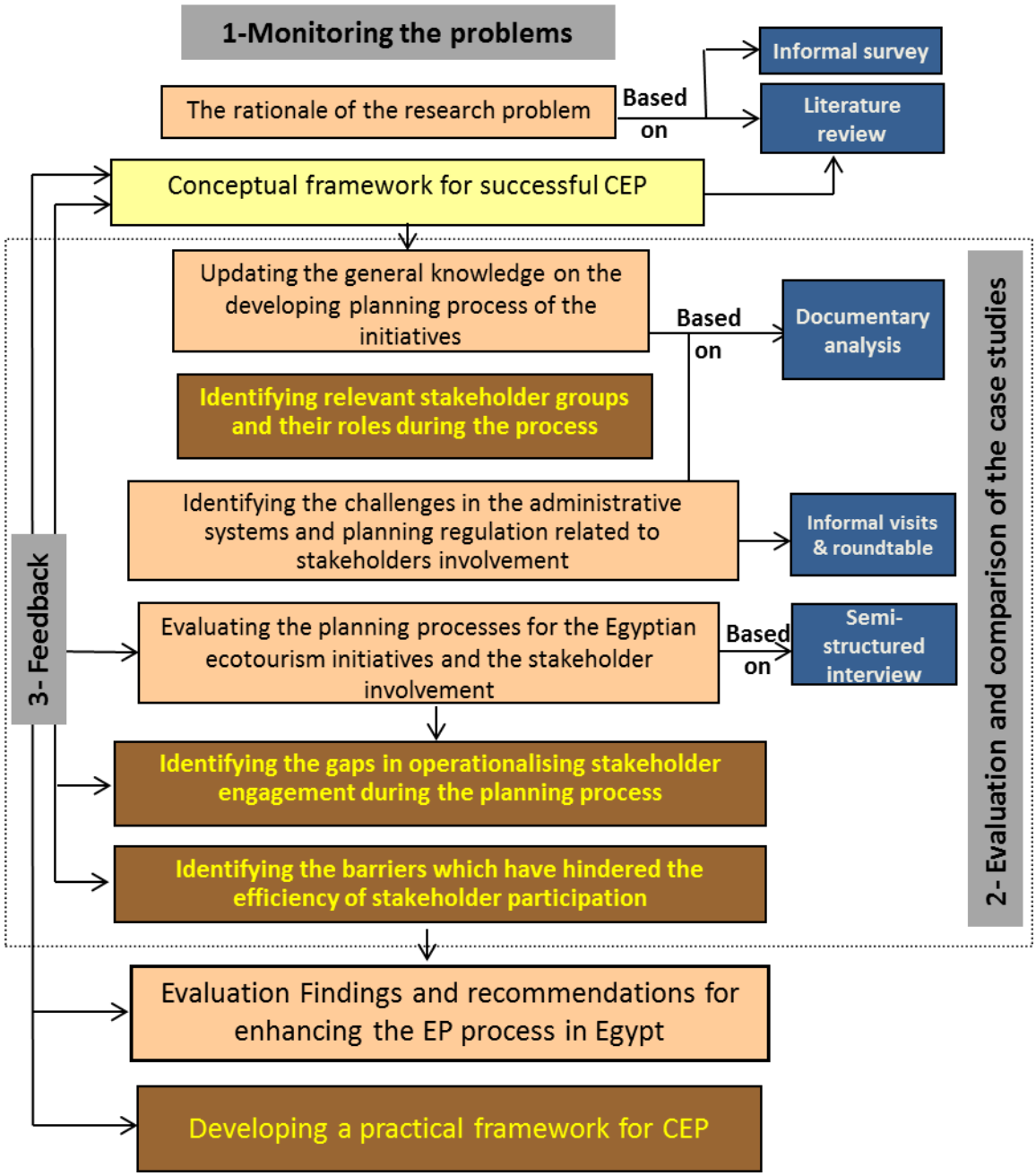


Figure (5-1) The case study methodology
Source: The author

5.3 The procedures of the case study selection

As mentioned above, a case study approach was adopted to answer the main question of this research, by comparing practice with the conceptual framework. The choice of the research case studies was based on a three-stepped approach.

1- Identifying all the ecotourism initiatives in Egypt: Egypt initiated ecotourism development plans in 1991, but it did not adopt ecotourism as a new strategy for Egyptian tourism development until 2002. This was after the World Ecotourism Summit, Quebec Conference, had been convened, as part of the United Nations' International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) in 2002. This Conference's recommendations obligated all participant countries (including Egypt) to formulate national, regional and local ecotourism development policies and strategies: *"…. that are consistent with the overall objectives of sustainable development, and to do so through a wide consultation process with those who are likely to become involved in, affect, or be affected by ecotourism activities" (UNWTO & UNEP 2002, p. 67).* Although the Quebec recommendations confirmed the necessity of national ecotourism policies and a strategy as a framework for regional and local development, between 2002 and 2009 Egypt finalised the majority of its regional and local ecotourism plans without a national ecotourism strategy. Then, at the end of 2009, the TDA prepared a national sustainable tourism strategy without any consideration of the outcomes of regional or local plans (TDA et al. 2009). Moreover, the ecotourism initiatives that were prepared after 2009, such as ecotourism for sustainable development initiative in the New Valley Governorate in 2012, were still not aligned with the national sustainable strategy framework (CISS & EDG 2012). The case studies for this research were selected from the regional ecotourism initiatives developed at this time. A survey of initiatives known to the EEAA and TDA was undertaken as these bodies are responsible for reviewing and auditing ecotourism development plans in Egypt. The research found that a dozen initiatives have been prepared to promote ecotourism development in Egypt (as shown in Table 5-1). All these initiatives were concentrated in only five Governorates (counties), and four of them were prepared in Fayoum. Three initiatives were prepared within the Red Sea area, both South Sinai and New Valley Governorates contained two initiatives; and one initiative was developed in North Sinai.

2- Classifying these initiatives: Based on an initial review of each project it could be concluded that all the planning phases of each initiative had been finished. Indeed the Ecotourism for Sustainable Development in the New Valley Governorate (ESDNVG) was the last to have been completed in June 2012. The initiatives that were prepared before 2000 were funded by the TDA, to support the diversification strategy that was adopted of this time (as discussed in section 4.2). All the initiatives which started after 2000 were funded by international governmental organisations or NGOs. In general, the initiatives in Fayoum[32] and the New Valley Governorate were funded by European organisations – North South Consultants Exchange (NSCE), Cooperation Internationale Süd-Süd (CISS), and the Royal Netherlands Embassy. The Red Sea initiatives were funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). North Sinai was funded by UNDP and MED WET Coast organisations.

An evaluation of the final documents gave the opportunity to evaluate the level of stakeholder involvement in the planning process of each initiative (Table 5-1). Three categories of engagement could be identified; exclusive, stakeholder involvement was limited to informing; less inclusive approaches, involved stakeholders stages in both informing and consultation; and, more inclusive approaches meant that stakeholders were involved in joint analysis and developing a plan, but the final decisions were taken by the government – see (Table 5-2).

[32] UNESCO-funded ecotourism development strategy in Whale Valley after it was declared a world heritage centre.

Table (5-1) The regional ecotourism development initiatives in Egypt

Gov.	Name	The end time of the produced plan	Prepared by	Planning** methodology
Fayoum Governorate	1- Ecotourism plan for sustainable development in the Fayoum Oasis	2000	TDA and NSCE	Less inclusive
	2- Preparatory phase for ecotourism development in Fayoum	2004	TDA, NSCE and Royal Netherlands Embassy	Less inclusive
	3- Ecotourism development strategy for Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley), world heritage centre	2006	TDA and Cairo Uni. UNESCO	Less inclusive
	4- Fayoum Ecotourism Development Plan 2005–2015 (FEDP)*	2008	CISS and Fayoum Governorate	More inclusive
Red Sea Governorate	5- Ecotourism development for El-Qusier – Marsa Alam Sector	2003	TDA and Integrated Consultants, USAID	Exclusive
	6- The Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative (RSSTI)*	2004	TDA, EEAA and USAID	More inclusive
	7- Livelihood and Income From Environment (LIFE)	2008	TDA, EEAA and USAID	More inclusive
North Sinai Gov.	8- Ecotourism development plan for Zaranik protected area	2004	EEAA and MED WET COAST	Less inclusive
South Sinai Governorate	9- Ecotourism and Desert Safari Development Plan for Taba - Newbie sector, Gulf of Aqaba	1996	TDA	Exclusive
	10- Ecotourism development plan of the Bedouin centre, Nuiebaa, Gulf of Aqaba	1999	TDA	Less inclusive
New Valley Governorate	11- the Indicative Ecotourism Development Plan for Siwa Oasis	1991	TDA	Exclusive
	12- Ecotourism for Sustainable Development in the New Valley Governorate (ESDNVG)*	2012	CISS, TDA and Italian-Egyptian Debt Swap Programme	More inclusive

Source: The author

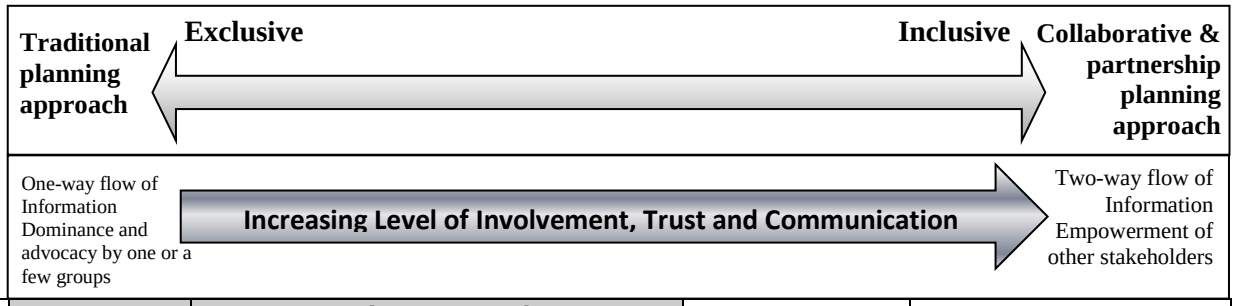
* Selected cases studies ** this evaluation has been based on the characteristics of the planning approach continuum in Table (5-2)

3- Selecting the case studies: This research chose a sample from the initiatives identified in Table (5-2) because the depth of analysis required from the conceptual framework was impossible to complete in the all twelve projects, due to limitations on time and money. Case studies selection was based on:

- *Recent*: The research chose the most recent initiatives because of the availability of data, relative ease of contacting the different stakeholder groups, and they incorporated the latest and most updated circumstances.
- *Influential*: The research chose the initiatives located in regions with a long history of resource conflicts. This provides the context for identifying factors that contribute to success or failure of a collaborative planning approach (Gunton, Peter & Day 2007). In addition, they could provide a good opportunity to understand how stakeholders could or could not reach a consensus about the issues and solutions.
- *Relevant*: The research chose initiatives that used a more inclusive approach in the planning process to help develop a practical framework for ecotourism collaborative planning.

Three further considerations were also recognised in choosing the cases: i) the selected initiatives should represent different Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) in order to cover various ecosystems and different social and cultural categories; ii) the selected initiatives were focused on making a development plan, which is the research problem. So, for example, the research did not choose the LIFE initiative, although it matched all the criteria discussed above. This is because it focused on the field actions of the RSSTI outcomes (Chemonics 2005); and iii) the selected initiatives represent different time periods following the Quebec Conference, in order to explore whether there were any discernible changes in any planning practice.

Table (5-2) Characteristics of planning approach continuum



features	Exclusive approach	Inclusive approach		Collaborative approach	Partnership approach
		Less inclusive	More inclusive		
Level of participation	Information Exchange (informing)	Plus Consultation (Listen & speak)	Plus Engagement/ Dialogue (Co-produce)	Plus Shared decisions (Co-decide)	Shared jurisdiction responsible and accountable (co-management)
Opportunity for input	None	Low	Medium	High	Very High
Participation events/points	Exclusion of the stakeholders	Limited in the beginning and end of the planning "Public hearing"	Participation at certain points more than beginning and end of the planning	Continuous participation "in all processes"	Strong bidirectional relationship
Stakeholders		The majority from public sectors and government authorities	Public sectors and representatives of local communities	All stakeholders who are affected and influenced by the project	All stakeholders who are affected and influenced by the project
Management approach	Top-down	Top-down	Top-down & bottom-up but central government driven	Balance between top-down and bottom-up	
Purpose	Creating awareness	- getting stakeholder input, advice and feedback - discussion of trade-offs and priorities; and becoming better informed	- in-depth exploration of views and interests, with emphasis on listening and achieving mutual understanding - exploration of values; and, in some situations working towards consensus	- share responsibility, decentralise decision-making to the community level - achieve integration, resolve conflicts, allocate scarce resources	- recognise constitutional assignment of powers - recognise, respect and reflect community values in governance decisions - make difficult allocation choices in a decentralised political context

Source: The author based on Alberta Government (2013); NIH (2011); Smith (2003); WEF (2000)

Consequently, the case studies chosen for this research were: i) Fayoum Ecotourism Development Plan 2005–2015 (FEDP); ii) The Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative (RSSTI); and iii) Ecotourism for Sustainable Development in the New Valley Governorate (ESDNVG).

5.4 Case study template: data collection and analysis

Evidence for the case study evaluation can be extracted from six sources: documents, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation and physical artefacts (Yin 2014). Each one of them alone is not sufficient to provide an accurate and complete picture of ecotourism development case studies. This research combined three methods in order to triangulate findings and provide a better understanding of the context (Morton 2009).

5.4.1 Documentation

Documentation is seen as a direct source of case study evidence and is used to triangulate data that have been collected from other methods. The documentation used in this research provides evidence for reviewing the ecotourism planning process, events and stakeholder mapping. The documentary materials used in this research include:

- Technical and management reports;
- Documents, factsheets and newsletters;
- Implementation and monitoring schedule and programme reports;
- Feedback and evaluation reports; and
- Other documents or plans covering geographical location of the case study.

These documents were collected by: i) using the governmental and donor websites to collect the available documents and investigate the potential places from which the documents could be accessed; ii) visiting the governmental bodies such as EEAA, TDA and the Governorates (in which the cases are located) to collect the available data in person; and iii) asking the interviewees to recommend places from which the information could be accessed.

5.4.2 Observation

Observation is a qualitative data collection method concerned with social science research. It allows the researcher to understand the selected case studies by entering their world either overtly or covertly (Kawulich 2005). In applied research, observation is often used at the beginning of data collection prior to other techniques such as interview being utilised (Mack et al. 2005). The main reasons for using observation during the fieldwork of this research were: i) to develop a holistic understanding of the process of development planning, the relationships among and between stakeholders, particularly the governmental authorities, during this process and the challenges impeding the implementation of the plans; ii) to develop positive relationships between the researcher and key informants in the governmental bodies. These relationships were valuable to the logistics of setting up the fieldwork, such as nominating the interviewees and gaining access to potential documents; and iii) to develop the questions of the interview using terms that make sense to the interviewees.

This research carried out overt observation through a number of informal visits to the governmental bodies such as EEAA, TDA, GOPP and the Governorates (in which the cases are located) before conducting the interviews. In addition, the researcher was involved in a festival for promoting ecotourism development in the Fayoum Governorate (one of the research cases). This festival[33] was essential for the research in allowing the researcher to meet a wide range of ecotourism development stakeholders in Fayoum and make appointments for the interviews.

[33] The Fayoum Tourism Authority (FTA) established the Handicraft Festival in Tunis village, Fayoum, between 23th and 25th November 2012 and invited some international ambassadors to market the ecotourism activities in this region. A wide range of stakeholders (governmental, NGOs, private sector and key people from the communities, etc.) were invited to this event.

5.4.3 Interviews

The interview is an effective method designed to provide people with an opportunity to explain their opinions and experiences about the research issues (Mack et al. 2005). The interview was designated to collect a significant part of case study evidence in this research for many reasons, such as:

- The need for flexibility in discussing the ecotourism planning process in order to analyse and evaluate stakeholder involvement, their specific roles during the process, and then develop a more practical framework for CEP matching Egyptian circumstances.
- An interview provides access to a range of experiences. Situations and knowledge are hard to interpret from other kinds of evidence such as documents. Thus, interviews were used to represent a wide range of expert perspectives. Interviewees included planners in governmental authorities concerned with ecotourism development, local stakeholder representatives such as local communities, the private sector, ecotourists, international organisations that shared or funded the projects, and consultancies employed to help prepare the final plans.

There were two rounds of interviews for each case study. The first stage was designed to update knowledge on the development planning process in general and ecotourism in particular, as well as to identify the official story of the case studies. It was also used to define the main stakeholder groups that were involved in this process to map out an interviewee network of critical stakeholders groups. These interviews were conducted with 19 key experts and consultants in ecotourism and sustainable tourism. Some had been or were directly involved in the selected case studies, others were not. Experts in evolution of the planning system and participatory planning approach were also involved during this stage (see Table 5-3).

The second stage of the interviews was focused on evaluating the ecotourism planning process that was experienced in each of the case studies. The interviews were based around the idealised conceptual framework questions as identified in Chapter Three. They also included discussions concerning the barriers and challenges to stakeholder collaboration encountered during the process and how these could be

mitigated. These interviews were the main base for developing the practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning in Egypt. The interview was conducted with 48 interviewees, including key experts and consultants who were involved in preparing the plans for each case study, and the relevant stakeholder groups – some who were directly involved in the process and others who had been excluded (Tables 5-3 and 5-4).

Table (5-3) Classification of the interviewees in each stage[34]

The first stage of the interviews	
Experts and consultants in ecotourism and sustainable tourism planning	7
Consultants in public participation and participatory approach	10
Experts in local government and community development	2
Total	19
The second stage of the interviews	
Experts and Consultants in preparing the cases' plans (EC)	10*
Public sector (PS)	23
Private sector (PrS)	4
Local communities (LC)	3
NGOs (NG)	3
Ecotourists (ET)	2
Funder and international organisation (FIO)	3
Total	48

* Four were also interviewed as part of the first stage

Table (5-4) Number of the interviewees in each case

Case studies	
The FEDP initiative	15
The ESDNVG initiative	9
The RSSTI initiative	9
FEDP, ESDNVG and RSSTI	11
FEDP and RSSTI	2
FEDP and ESDNVG	2
Total	48

[34] Further information about the interviews can be found in Appendix 1.

The interviews at both stages were conducted in a face-to-face manner between September and December 2012. The interviews were semi-structured to provide answers to a fixed range of questions as well as to allow a more in-depth discussion to help understand each interviewee's interpretation of the planning process and how the process could be enhanced (Rapley 2004). The semi-structured interview also provided the researcher with the flexibility to adjust the order of the questions according to interviewee answers and helped to clarify any ambiguities, thereby gaining high-quality information (Altinay 2008). The respondents were selected using a linear snowball technique[35] initially based on the stakeholder mapping exercises drawn from the documentary review, observation, phase one interviews, and the researcher's existing networks. A key contact in each stakeholder group was identified based on the social network that the researcher had already built during his career as an assistant lecturer at the Faculty of Urban and Regional Planning, Cairo University and his active participation in local consultancy projects.

All interviews were conducted in the Arabic language, which is the official language in Egypt. This gave interviewees the best opportunity and ability to explain and discuss their experiences of ecotourism planning. During the interviews with the public sector representatives, the researcher took handwritten notes rather than making audio recordings, so that the participants felt more able to express their opinions. The researcher transcribed and translated these notes into English directly after the interviews while the information was still fresh in his mind. The respondents from the other stakeholder groups were happy to accept the researcher recording their interviews using an audio recorder.

The researcher prepared an interview guide/structure including all points that should be covered. This guide consisted of three main parts: i) introduction to build the trust between the researcher and respondents through explaining the importance of the research, the purpose of the interview, confidentiality, etc. As Altinay (2008) has emphasised, the interviewer should have a short introductory statement including '*a*

[35] A snowball technique was the most appropriate approach for this research because not all ecotourism stakeholders were appropriate for interview. It was also necessary to ensure that each interviewee had enough experience to provide high-quality information to build an interpretive understanding about ecotourism development planning in Egypt.

short brief about the research, the purpose of the interview and the main reasons behind selecting the respondents' (p. 109); ii) the main themes for the interview, which included a conversational-style approach based around the conceptual framework to provide respondents with the maximum room for discussion; and iii) the conclusion, to summarise the main points of the conversation to ensure the researcher had a good understanding of the respondent's views and ask her/him to recommend other people to meet.

The efficiency and effectiveness of the interviews were further enhanced by piloting the interview to test the interview structure and the questions. As a result, several changes were made:

- The researcher found some questions were too long (had too many parts) and needed to be divided into smaller one-part questions because the interviewee only remembered and responded to the first part of the question
- In addition, some questions needed to be added towards the end of the conversation to probe for the reliability and validity of the data.
- Rewording and reordering some of the questions were required according to the discussion sequences and the background of the respondents and their familiarity with the research issue.
- Particularly in the governmental context, threatening questions needed to be avoided. There are key sensitivities regarding the effectiveness of the public administration system and possible mistakes made by the government during some case studies. Thus, the researcher used indirect questions about these issues, especially with public sector respondents, and assured them of confidentiality.
- Asking for examples and using interpretative questions to enrich the discussion about certain issues.

5.4.4 Major challenges in collecting data

This section will shed some light on the challenges that faced the researcher during the data collection process, particularly during the interviews (which represent the main method), and how they were dealt with. These challenges can be divided into two main groups: difficulties in scheduling, and difficulties in conducting the interviews.

Challenges in scheduling the interviews: The first challenge was gaining access to the different stakeholder groups. Although, from the researcher's experience[36], this was expected, it consumed a lot of time because many calls and emails were required to set up an appointment for an interview, particularly when the participant was a senior member of staff. The researcher tried to handle this challenge through using personal contacts and a linear snowball method to access the key experts, consultants and key informants in the governmental authority who provided the researcher with access to other stakeholders such as local government staff, NGOS, private sector and key people in the local communities. Furthermore, there was also limited access to the international donors that funded the case studies. It was important to get their perspectives regarding how the plans were prepared, how the stakeholders were involved and collaborated through the process, and any barriers impeding their involvement. The researcher emailed[37] them and then provided the detailed interview structure and responses were made according to their queries, but, unfortunately, they were not interested in participating in any interviews. They did not give any reasons for this. So, the researcher replaced these organisations with ex-employees who had been involved during preparation of the case studies.

Another limitation was that the researcher had limited time to visit different communities in each case study, to assess how they had been involved, and identify any barriers impeding their participation. Only the main settlement (such as Tunis village in FEDP) was visited in each case study area. The researcher covered this

[36] The researcher previously practised similar interviews in Egypt

[37] The researcher tried to contact the main funders of the case studies but they were not interested in participating in the interviews in this research.

limitation of inability to access the local community views through the secondary data and examining the technical and management reports of each of the cases.

Challenges in conducting the interviews: After succeeding in scheduling the interviews, some of them were changed at the last minute. In some other cases, the participants came too late or apologised, and did not attend the interview, and asked for another appointment. Furthermore, typical interviews took place at their workplaces and during working time, which led to the discussions being stopped many times by colleagues of the respondents. The researcher tried to refocus the respondent's attention by giving a summary of the key points of the discussion before the interruption. Another challenge was that some respondents were biased and provided inaccurate information. The researcher tried to handle this issue through asking the same question in a different way to confirm the information and then checking by comparing with other sources. Furthermore, the researcher found that it was hard to complete the interview with two respondents because their answers were poor. The researcher substituted alternative interviewees who could provide more detailed and informed responses. With regard to the RSSTI, some of the participants, particularly from the local communities, had difficulties in remembering all the details about this initiative, which had been completed eight years previous to the interviews. Their comments had to be cross-checked by comparing them with the secondary data and formal documentation from the project.

5.4.5 Ethical issues in data collection

Good ethical principles were fully considered during the data collection phase of this research. First, full information about the research purpose and significance was the starting point for all interviews and observations, in order to be honest with participants and build trust in the research. This introductory part helped to conduct the research in a confident way (Mack et al. 2005). Confidentiality and anonymity were also guaranteed. The researcher promised the participants (particularly the government staff) that the information provided during the interviews and observations would be anonymised in writing up the research findings. The researcher has used codes for all respondents to cover their identities – the reader cannot recognise the participants – to prevent any harm coming to them. Moreover, the

interview guide/structure, especially the main part related to the questions, was reviewed and approved according to ethical guidelines of both the University of Liverpool and the Egyptian Cultural Centre & Educational Bureau in London (the sponsor of this research). Finally, informed consent was sought from participants to acknowledge that their rights will be protected during data collection (Creswell 2009). In the Egyptian context, is practically impossible to get signed or written consent from all respondents, but tacit consent was gained from the participants through their acceptance to take part in the interview by email or orally.

5.4.6 Data analysis

The data collected from the interviews and documentary sources were qualitative, which needs analytic strategies to convert this raw data into a logical explanation of the ecotourism development initiatives (Altinay 2008). Classification is one of the most appropriate strategies for analysing the collected data in this research. The conceptual framework was utilised as a reference for these classifications. The categories and sub-categories were created from analysing data related to the components and sub-components of this conceptual framework. These categories were used to shape the analysis chapters. Chapter Seven is used to evaluate the ecotourism planning initiatives and define the gaps, which have been filled in Chapter Eight.

The process followed to create these categories was: i) transcribing interviews, observation notes and audio files; ii) rereading and adding annotation of themes and ideas in the context of the stakeholder involvement during the planning process in order to define significant issues, stages and relations; and iii) creating categories based on these annotations using a line-by-line approach to analyse each bit of data. Although computer programs such as Atlas.ti and NVivo could be used to promote the efficiency of this analysis, the researcher used a manual approach because the data was not too massive to be categorised manually. In addition, all the audio files would need to be scripted and translated into English and revisited and then assigned in the software, and these steps required a lot of time and effort.

5.5 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the research strategy and the methods adopted to collect and analyse the data. As well as the methodology, the research has been operationalised to examine and evaluate the Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives through the lens of the conceptual framework. Operationalisation of the research was explained through three parts. The first was to answer why case study was chosen as the research strategy. The second part was to answer how and why the case studies of the research were chosen. The final part discussed the case study template for data collection and analysis.

The next chapters will use the collected data to examine and evaluate the case studies based on the conceptual framework. Chapter Six will explore the ecotourism initiatives and define the planning activities in each case and then Chapter Seven will evaluate them against the conceptual framework.

Chapter Six: The Egyptian ecotourism initiatives

Chapter Six

The Egyptian ecotourism initiatives

The previous chapter discussed the process that was followed to choose three case studies from the Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives. It also explained the methodology the research has operationalised to examine and evaluate these case studies using the conceptual framework. This chapter aims to provide the context to the three case studies in order to provide a context for understanding the analysis. Each initiative will be described in three sections: the first describes the context of the Governorate in which the initiative is located. The second investigates the opportunities and risks for ecotourism development in the Governorate to understand the circumstances of the initiatives. The final section covers the initiative's historical context and contemporary planning process. The stakeholder involvement activities during the process will be discussed at the end.

6.1 Fayoum Ecotourism Development Plan (FEDP)

6.1.1 The Governorate context

The Fayoum Governorate is located in the Western Desert about one hundred kilometres south-west of Cairo (Figure 6-1). Its location offers the potential to integrate its ecotourism products with historical tourism products in Cairo and Giza, only being about 45-60 minutes travel time from Fayoum to these locations. Furthermore, Fayoum tourism products could also be integrated with the coastal and marine tourism products of the Red Sea, particularly after the Al Kurimat – Al Zafrana highway is developed increasing the connectivity between all products.

It is a small Governorate both in terms of area (6068 km², represents 0.6% of the area of the country) and population (2.51 million people in 2006, 3.4% of the country's population) (CAPMAS 2006). The population density in Fayoum is around 413 people per km², considerably less than that in the Nile Valley and Delta, which is about 1500 people per km². This is largely because Fayoum has vast uninhabited desert areas, covering about 60% of its total area. These desert areas have enormous potential for ecotourism development.

There are three traditional communities within the Governorate which offer ecotourism potential. The first group, consisting of settled Bedouin tribes and fishermen, is located in the villages south of Qarun Lake, such as Tunis and Shakshok, and in the middle of the Governorate, such as Nazla and El-Alaam. These communities are famous for their unique traditional handicrafts such as pottery, basketry, and fishing net and boat manufacturing. The second group is the rural communities, which characterise the majority of the Fayoum people. They are characterised by a traditional, static and quiet farmer lifestyle. This might suitable for a small segment of the ecotourism market interested in rural life, where tourists prefer to stay with local communities and participate in rural activities. The semi-urban communities are the third group, located in six cities of Fayoum.

These three groups have the potential to engage in a collaborative approach towards ecotourism development. They have natural leaders and key actors who can motivate the communities to become involved in the development process. But there are also some barriers which might limit engagement, such as the high rate of illiteracy, which was 34% compared with the national average of 29.7% (GOPP & UNDP 2010); low household income, £2000 per year compared with a national average of £2540 (CAPMAS 2013); and very high local unemployment rates (Khalifa & El-Khateeb 2011). Therefore, many Fayoum people try to get jobs by migrating to Cairo and Giza. As a result, special efforts may be required to facilitate their engagement in the ecotourism development process (EC-1)[38].

[38] A reference to the interviewee/s: the acronyms refer to the interviewee groups: EC= Experts & Consultants in ecotourism development or participatory planning, PS = An employee in the Public Sector, PrS = Representative of the Private Sector bodies, NG = A member of NGO boards, LC = A member of the key persons of the Local Communities, T= Representative of the ecotourists, FIO = A member of the Funder and International Organisations; and the number refers to the serial number of the interviewee in each group.

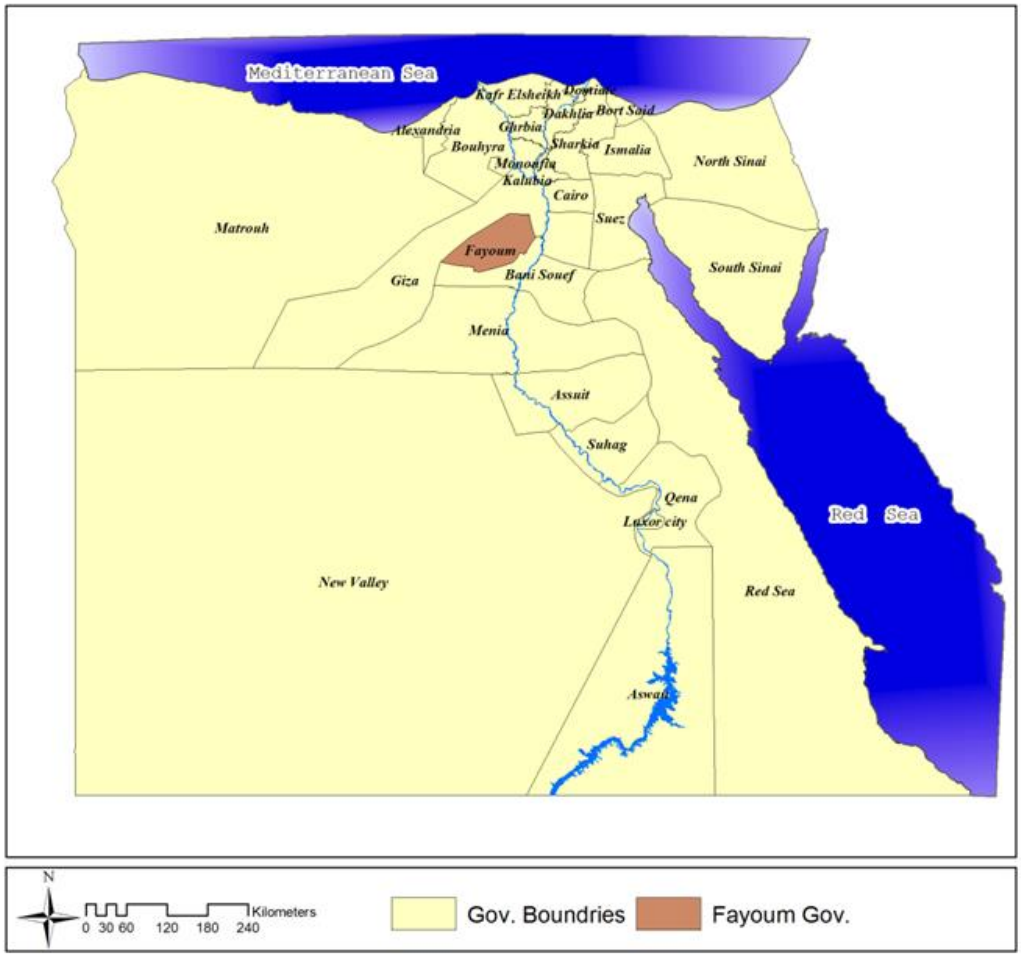


Figure (6-1) The Fayoum Governorate location
Source: The author based on GOPP database (2010)

6.1.2 Opportunities and risks for ecotourism development

The ecotourism attractions in the Fayoum Governorate (FG) include nature, culture and heritage-based activities, which provide the potential for an unique personal experience for ecotourists. Moreover, the FG contains three protected areas, one of which was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 2005 (Fayoum & EEAA 2008). Three levels of ecotourism attractions can be identified (see Figure 6-2):-

i) Focal attractions: these are attractive enough to motivate tourists to visit them. These are related to the local natural and cultural heritage. The focal attractions include:

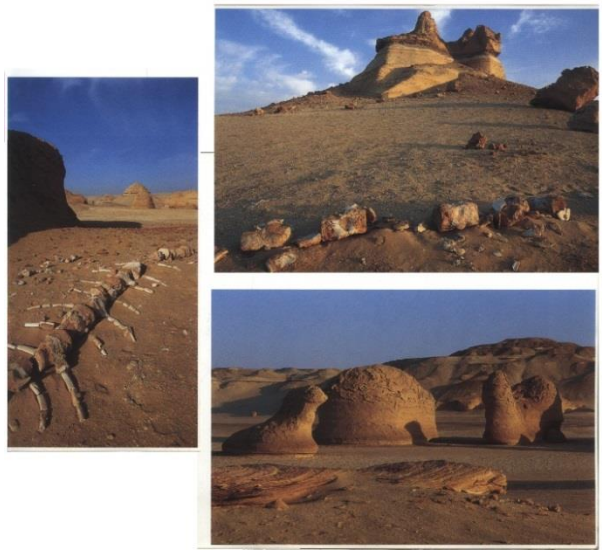
- Scientific excursions to the World Heritage Site of Wadi El-Hitan (Whale Valley)[39] and Petrified Forest at the north of Qarun Lake;
- Bird-watching around the lakes and in the agricultural lands; and
- Desert safari activities (mountain climbing and hiking, desert trekking, horse and camel riding, etc.).

ii) Secondary attractions do not possess the degree of distinctiveness of the focal attractions but they are also related to the features of natural and cultural heritage. These attractions alone are not enough to motivate the tourists to visit the Fayoum, but they constitute further interest and added value for the ecotourist, contributing to richer and more diverse tourism experiences (Saballous 1997 cited in CISS & EDG 2008). The secondary attractions include:

- Observing diverse and unique fauna and flora;
- Direct contact with community lifestyles;
- Watersports activities in the lakes (feluccas, kayaking, and swimming in the lower of Wadi El-Rayan lake);
- Visits to the archaeological sites (Qasr El Sagha, Medinet Madi, etc.); and
- The geological features of the desert areas, which are especially appealing to photographers and geologists (TDA & NSCE 2000).

iii) Supporting attractions include man-made features (facilities and services) that serve specific needs of tourists and satisfy the practical requirements of ecotourists. These attractions include local handicrafts, existing accommodation facilities on the southern shoreline of Qarun Lake, such as Panorama, El-Mandra ecolodge, and the Safari Camp in Wadi El-Rayan protected area (CISS & EDG 2008).

[39] In July, 2005 UNESCO announced that Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley) in the Fayoum Desert would be designated the first natural heritage spot in Egypt and one of the most important in the world (GOPP & UNDP 2010).



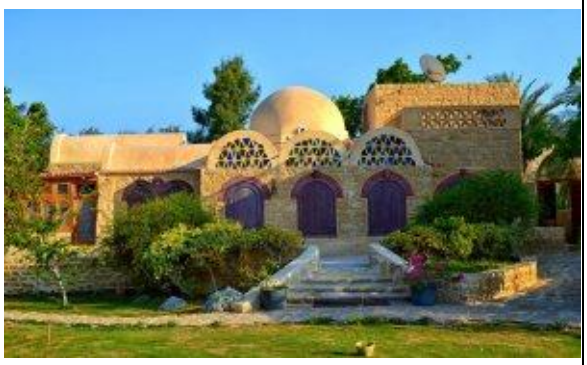
The World Heritage Site of Whales Valley as an example of a focal attraction
Source: Khalil and Ali (2000)

Wadi El-Rayan lake
Source: (FTA 2013)

Qarun Lake
Source:Khalifa and El-Khateeb (2011)

Examples of secondary attractions

Local handicrafts
Source: The author during the fieldwork
24/11/2012



Palm Shadows ecolodge
Source: (FTA 2013)

Examples of supporting attractions

Figure (6-2) The levels of ecotourism attractions in the Fayoum

Although the FG has a diversity of resources, there are several issues that may hinder ecotourism development in the area. These include:

- *Conflict relating to land ownership jurisdictions:* The ownership and authority of the Fayoum lands such as the shorelines of the Qarun and Wadi El-Rayan Lakes are shared between many different government departments (Figure 6-3) governed by different laws, with an absence of coordination. Consequently, conflicts of interest often arise (CISS & EDG 2008).

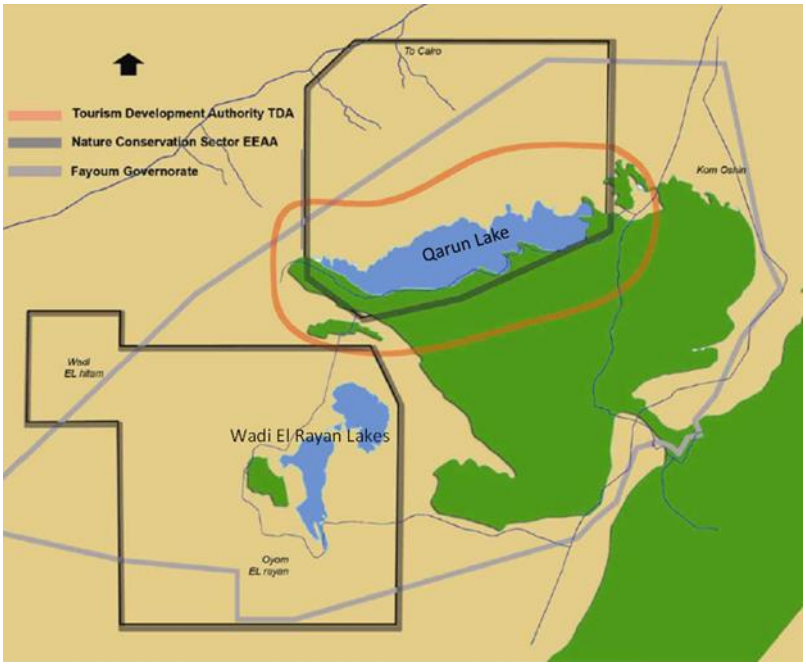


Figure (6-3) The conflict in land jurisdictions
Source: CISS and EDG (2008)

- *Water Pollution* in Qarun Lake is a significant problem caused by agricultural runoff and poor treatment of settlement sewage. This has led to irreparable damage to the lake's ecosystem and a gradual decline in fishing stocks. This pollution greatly impedes the potential use of the lake for water sports or swimming (GOPP & UNDP 2010).
- *Fossil and Heritage Sites' excavation:* Fayoum has numerous sites which are full of Pharaonic, Greek, Coptic and Islamic human heritage antiques as well as fossils and prehistoric remains. Many remain still unexplored, especially along the north coast of Qarun Lake and the Wadi of El-Rayan. These areas are under threat from illegal excavation by visitors and people from neighbouring areas. Many come to

the Fayoum fossil beds during the weekends and take away enormous quantities of fossils and antiquities (Khalifa & El-Khateeb 2011).

- *Negative impact on critical habitats:* Major changes in the natural habitats of the unique and important areas of Fayoum are already taking place, leading to serious deterioration in the fragile environment. For instance, the over-exploitation of the southern shore of Qarun Lake has resulted in the destruction of extensive areas of salt marshes and mud flats, which are an important habitat for a variety of birds and breeding areas for commercially important fisheries and crustaceans (CISS & EDG 2008).
- *The limited capacity of the workforce* in Fayoum represents one of the main challenges hindering ecotourism development, particularly when it cannot meet quality ecotourism requirements. There is a gap between the needs of tourism employers and the supply of suitably trained local personnel (CISS 2013b; GOPP & UNDP 2010).
- *Lack of tourism facilities and services*: The quality and quantity of tourism facilities are inadequate for successful ecotourism development in Fayoum. For instance, the number of hotel rooms represents only 0.21% of the whole number in Egypt (the Red Sea and Cairo represent 33% and 13% respectively) (Hilmi et al. 2012). The majority of them are located in Fayoum city or along the southern shore of Qarun Lake. Furthermore, the quality of healthcare and emergency service provision in Fayoum is poor (CISS 2013a).
- *A weak tourism market:* The Fayoum tourism market mainly depends on domestic visitors, with international tourists forming only a very small fraction of total visitor numbers. The market essentially depends on short-stay and one-day trips because Fayoum is close to Cairo and Giza. Less than 10% of visitors spend a night in the area. The vast majority of visitors go to Fayoum at weekends or during national holidays (CISS & EDG 2008).

6.1.3 Ecotourism planning initiative

This section is designed to explore the initiative through its historical context and contemporary planning process and then focus on the stakeholder involvement activities during the process.

a) The historical context

Over last two decades, there have been about 14[40] different initiatives regarding future plans for Fayoum's development, six of which were to improve tourism development. These initiatives were promoted by different authorities, including TDA, EEAA, MPIC, GOPP and the Fayoum Governorate with the help of Cairo University. The majority of these initiatives contained many similar elements because of a lack of integration between the authorities. There were also several direct conflicts within and between some of these initiatives which led to incongruous proposals for land use development and failure to make coherent decisions, leading to a loss of environmental and economic benefits. Examples of these conflicts include:

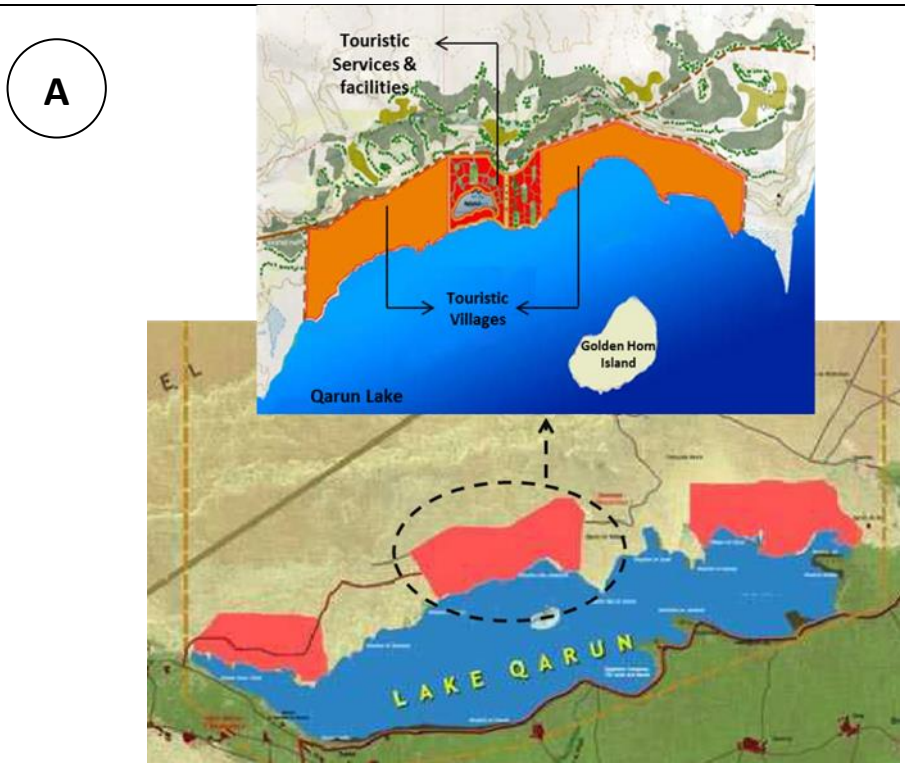
- In 2004, the TDA prepared a tourism development plan for the northern coast of Qarun Lake in order to realise the development potentials of this area (Figure 6-4, A). The initiative aimed to create new investment opportunities through the promotion of new three tourism centres. These centres would encourage mass tourism development; 2850 hotel rooms, and 4200 tourist housing units (villas, chalets, and apartments as secondary housing units) were proposed, which would more than double the existing tourism accommodation offer in the Governorate. The targeted investment was expected to reach four billion Egyptian pounds (£0.4 billion). However, this initiative was incompatible with EEAA guidelines for Qarun Lake, which, as it is a protected area, recommended low density of ecolodges and ecotourism activities. These mass tourism centres were also incompatible with future plans of the Ministry of Antiquities (MOA) and with the Governorate's plans for ecotourism development in this area (Figure 6-4, B). As a result of these conflicts, some of the environmental activists (NGOs) raised issues in the

[40] Further information about these initiatives can be found in Appendix 3.

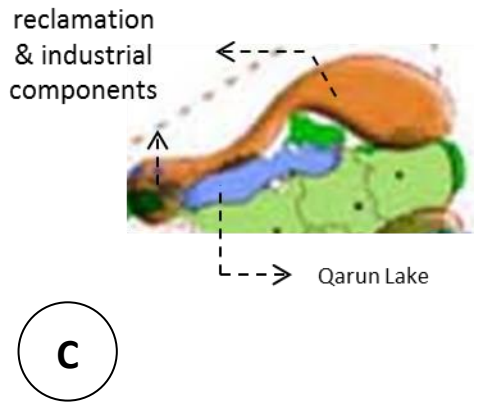
court against the TDA plan. Consequently, all development in this area was stopped.

- In 2005, GOPP established a spatial development plan for the Fayoum Governorate which proposed a new industrial park for the north-west area of Qarun Lake. However, these plans conflicted with this area's environmental characteristics (Figure 6-4, C). In 2008, GOPP prepared another plan for Fayoum in order to solve this conflict. The industrial park was moved to south of the Wadi El-Rayan protected area, but without any consultation with the EEAA, who must provide the final approval for any plans relating to protected areas in Egypt.

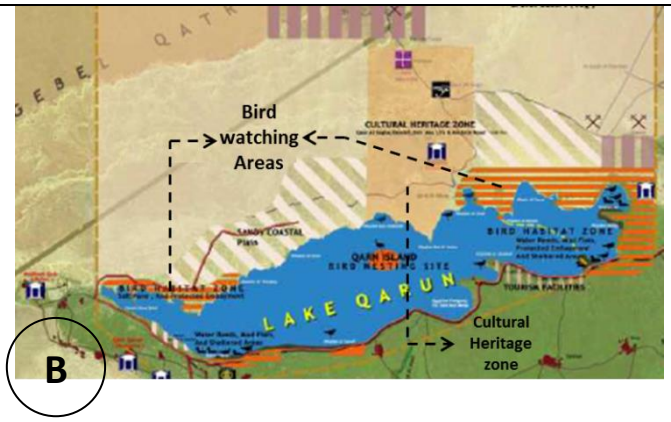
The main reasons for these conflicts are: i) each plan was prepared in isolation from the other plans and previous studies; ii) not only is there no cooperation or integration between the governmental authorities but also they hide the information from each other (PS-10); and iii) there is an absence, throughout the planning process, of the main stakeholders (local communities and private sector) who could have identified the overlaps and conflicts from an early stage (EC-20).



The planned tourism development centres in the northern coast of Qarun Lake by TDA in 2004
Source: The author based on CISS and EDG (2008); TDA (2013)



Fayoum development strategy in 2005
Source: The author based GOPP (2005)



Fayoum ecotourism development plan in 2002, 2004 & 2008
Source: The author based on CISS and EDG (2008); TDA and NSCE (2000)

Figure (6-4) The conflicts between the Fayoum initiatives' products (different proposals for land use for the same area)

b) The contemporary planning process

The FEDP initiative researched here covered the total area of the Fayoum Governorate plus the parts of Qarun Lake, Wadi El-Rayan and Wadi E-Hitan (Whale valley) protected areas[41] that are located out of the Fayoum Governorate boundary (Figure 6-5).

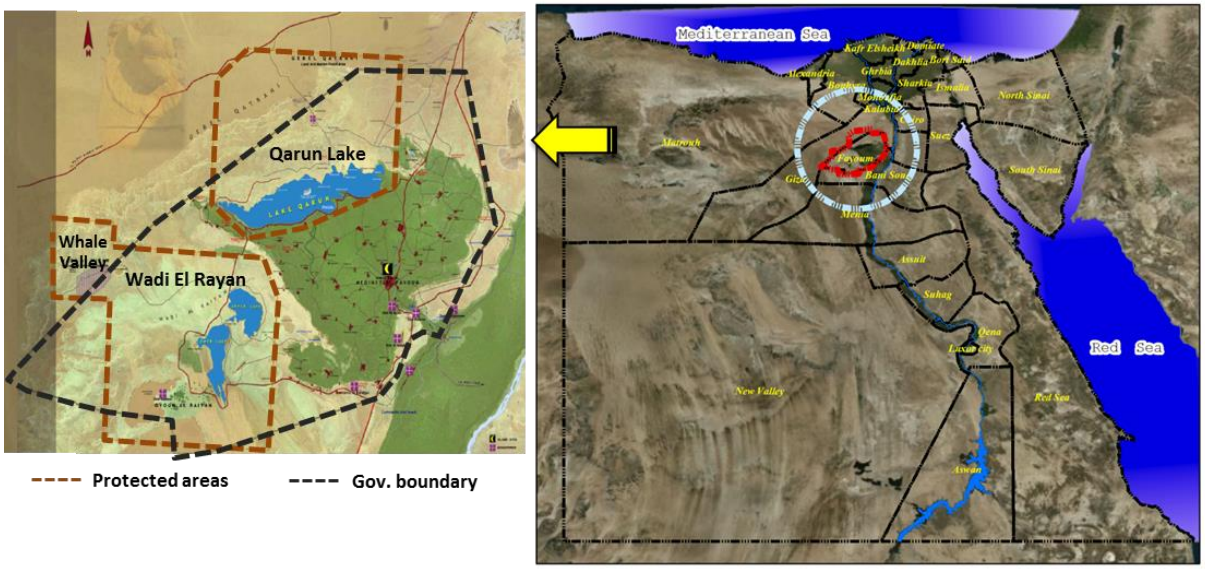


Figure (6-5) The FEDP initiative location
Source: The author based on CISS and EDG (2008)

[41]These protected areas' boundaries were delineated by the Administration of Nature Conservation Sector in EEAA regardless of the boundaries of Governorates, so they contain some parts outside of the Fayoum Governorate.

The total budget of the FEDP was €1.311 million, which was funded by the Italian government and an Italian NGO, CISS, which focuses on sustainable development more generally and ecotourism in particular. Each contributed half of the initiative budget as a grant to the Egyptian government (CISS 2013a). The FEDP was prepared by the CISS, through its planning consultancy team, working with the Fayoum Governorate, as represented by the Fayoum Tourism Authority (FTA). The planning process was coordinated by a joint CISS and FTA steering committee, and involved the efforts of more than 50 individuals, representing various stakeholders. These included the Administration of Nature Conservation Sector of the EEAA, Regional Office of the TDA, Municipal Administrations of Fayoum cities, members of the Egyptian Tourism Federation (ETF), NGOs, local people, tourism businesses and investors (CISS & EDG 2008).

The FEDP was designed to develop ecotourism in the Fayoum Governorate based on its unique assets in order to help alleviate poverty in the Governorate's communities. It aimed to conserve and promote the value of the environmental and cultural heritage of the Fayoum Governorate while the area was promoted as an attractive destination for both national and international visitors. The FEDP outcome was designed to provide the Fayoum Governorate with an overall assessment of the existing condition of resources related to ecotourism development and to put forward an action plan to increase the capacity for ecotourism in the Fayoum Governorate (CISS & EDG 2008; Khalifa & El-Khateeb 2011). More specifically, the goals were to:

- Contribute to sustainable development and poverty reduction though the generation of ecotourism-based economic activities undertaken by the local population;
- Transform the environmental, social cultural and heritage resources of Fayoum into sustainable economic assets;
- Diversify Fayoum's tourism industry by exploiting the fast-growing international ecotourism market;
- Empower the local population through direct participation in locally generated economic activities;

- Emphasise the qualitative economic impacts of ecotourism and how the poor and other segments of Fayoum society could profit from increased tourist activity;
- Develop handicrafts industries that will allow rural people to participate in ecotourism revenues;
- Provide a sense of local identity and character for Fayoum through ecotourism development; and
- Protect the traditional values, cultural and natural environmental assets (CISS & EDG 2008, p.56).

The FEDP initiative was started in 2005 and completed in 2008. The Steering Committee and Planning Team of the initiative proposed several phases of activities, as outlined below (Figure 6-6).

Phase one: diagnosis

This phase focused on individual issues as a preliminary step. This phase resulted in comprehensive and precise information regarding the condition of existing ecotourism development assets in the FG. This information was considered to be an important baseline survey for future decision-makers and included three main activities:

Understanding the environmental and cultural setting: This information played two vital roles in ecotourism planning. First, it determined the area's potential or viability as an ecotourism destination. The second role was concerned with ascertaining the sensitivity of different areas to human activity in order to identify the critical issues for environmental management that need to be addressed to promote sustainable development. The outputs from this activity were a database and maps of environmental and cultural resources including: a) Natural heritage resources (such as Palaeontology, Geology and soils, Landforms and Natural landscape, Climate, Flora and Fauna); b) History and archaeology resources (Pharaohs, Greek-Roman, Coptic and Islamic features); and c) Handicrafts and local culture involving outstanding traditional handicrafts expressive of the history and traditions of local people in the Fayoum, such as pottery, handmade textiles, rowboat construction, and fishing-net manufacturing, etc.) (CISS & EDG 2008).

The handicraft assessment in the Fayoum was considered to be one of the most important outcomes of this phase. There has been a significant decline in the demand for handicraft products and many of the craft producers have abandoned their profession. The products are now largely unfit for sale due to a lack of quality assurance. In addition, producer skills in management, production process, trade, marketing, pricing and decision-making were very weak (CISS 2013a; CISS & EDG 2008), contributing further to the vicious cycle of decline.

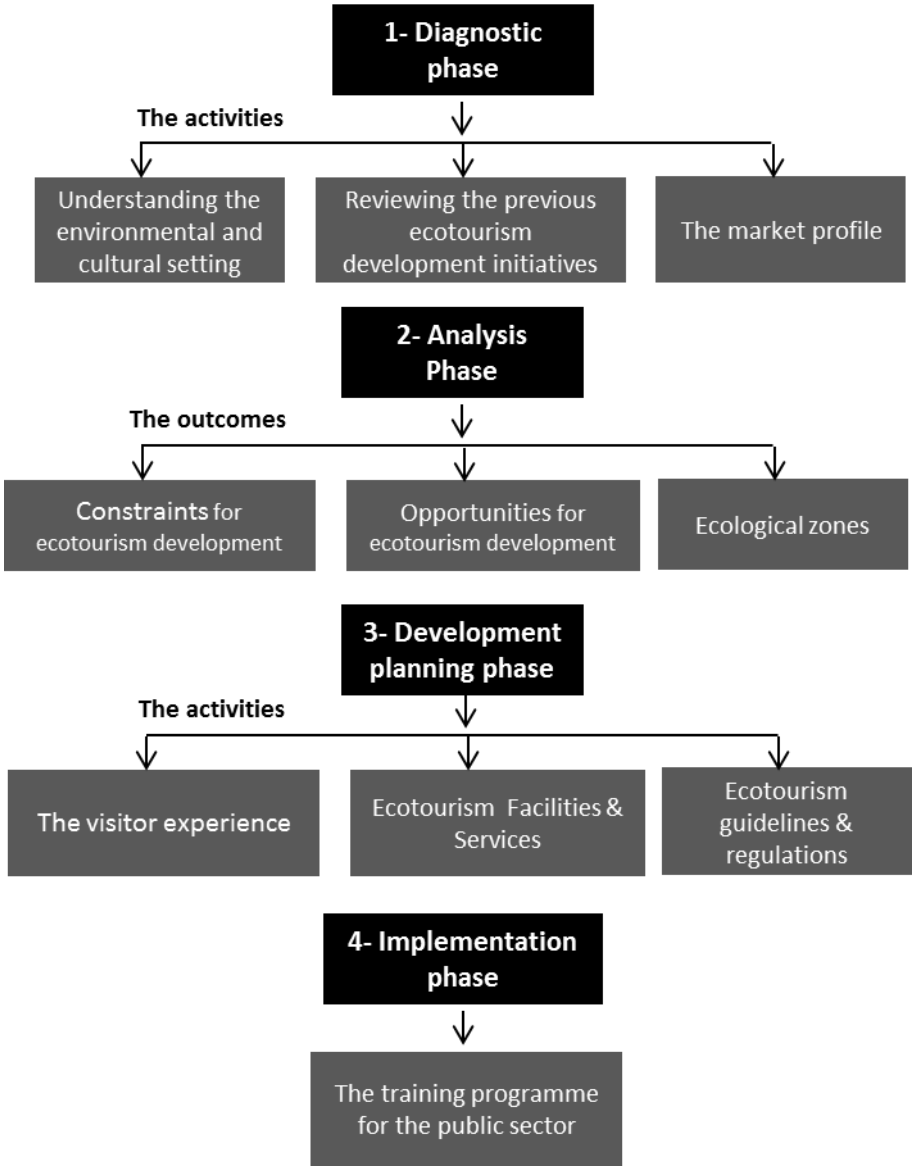


Figure (6- 6) The FEDP phases of activities
Source: The author

Reviewing the previous ecotourism development initiatives in Fayoum: One of the main objectives of the diagnosis phase was to assess and update previous attempts at developing ecotourism development plans and policies that had been prepared in the last decade. The planning team reviewed the previous five initiatives designed to address the challenges for ecotourism development in Fayoum. However, the general conclusions from each one were insufficient to affect the FEDP process or outcomes (PS-5 and PS-10). Furthermore no real understanding or insights were given as to why plans were not implemented, or to explain how implementation could be enhanced (EC-9 and Khalifa & El-Khateeb 2011).

The market profile: This study provided details about the existing demand for, and supply of, ecotourism products in Fayoum. The main conclusion was that the demand tends to be seasonal and depends on short stays and one-day trips and was concentrated on the southern shore of Qarun Lake and in Fayoum City.

Phase two: the analysis

This phase elaborated on the comprehensive analysis of the diagnosis stage and was intended to provide insights to decision-makers about the constraints and opportunities of the ecotourism development that accurately characterised the Fayoum Governorate. At the end of the second phase, the ecological zones and key habitats had been identified: i) desert areas; ii) deep-water lake areas; iii) lake shores; and iv) agricultural lands. The Planning Team also defined for each zone the opportunities and constraints for ecotourism development and the requirements of environmental management practices (CISS 2013a; CISS & EDG 2008).

Phase three: development planning

This phase provided the future ecotourism development proposals based on the results of the diagnostic and analytical phases. A plan was considered to be the main output from this third phase. Before the ecotourism plan was proposed, the planning team put together an overall vision of what ecotourism development might be like 20 years into the future. The main objectives of the plan were to define and focus on resolving the major threats to local resources and boosting ecotourism development in

the FG (CISS & EDG 2008). The ecotourism development plan in the Fayoum focused on enhancing:

The visitor experience: One of the main components of the ecotourism plan was to define the types of visitor experiences and ecotourism activities that would be provided to the visitors, because ecotourists seek high-quality recreational, cultural and educational experiences. The planning team suggested the visitor experience in Fayoum could be delivered through two products. The first one was focused on developing coherent ecotourism themes involving ecotour itineraries and activities. Each could provide a good experience for ecotourists. For example, themes could trace Fayoum's fossils and historical heritage sites, or involve boating, kayaking and fishing activities on the lakes. The second product was ecotourism visitor experience zones (Figure 6-7). These zones aimed to identify, evaluate, and classify the visitor experience according to levels of sensitivity and match suitable activities for each zone. Each zone also specified a particular combination of physical, biological, social, and management guidelines. Each type of zone indicated where and what type of ecotourism infrastructure and services should be provided, in order to minimise the negative impacts on the natural and cultural environment, as well as optimising the ecotourism experience. Consequently, four main visitor experience zones were proposed: i) Wild (strict natural zone); ii) Primitive (Reserve Protection Zone); ii) Semi-Primitive (Recreational Ecotourism Zone); and iv) Threshold (Development Zone) (CISS & EDG 2008).

Ecotourism Facilities and Services: The Ecotourism Development Plan contained a large number of potential activities ranging from ecolodges to trekking that could provide various ecotourism experiences. These facilities and services included (as shown in Figure 6-8): visitor centres, interpretive stations, ecolodges, campsites, multipurpose eco-stations, handicrafts outlets, medical facilities and jetties. Furthermore, this plan showed the trail system which represented a routing system connecting to the area’s most interesting and attractive natural and cultural resources.

Ecotourism development guidelines and regulations: The Ecotourism Development Plan provided a comprehensive list of guidelines and regulations to accomplish the desired outcomes. It also provided a practical tool enabling the

authorities to evaluate proposed ecotourism activities and a basis for assessing the performance of ecotourism development, recognising best practice in the development of ecotourism products. These guidelines included what type and scale of development would be appropriate (and conversely where and why restrictions would apply) in each of the visitor zones (CISS 2013a; CISS & EDG 2008).

Phase four: implementation

This phase was limited to a training programme to address the gaps in the capacity of the FTA, EEAA, TDA, and Fayoum Information Centre staff on ecotourism planning and principles. The programme was delivered successfully during the last six months of the FEDP initiative. The training programme enabled the participants to understand the principles of ecotourism, the trends of ecotourism, and ecotourism planning strategies, techniques and guidelines. Other capacity-building training programmes were proposed for the other stakeholders but they were not implemented. For instance neither local guide training, which aimed to create a new generation of local guides to support the ecotourism industry in Fayoum, nor a capacity-building training scheme for young architects on ecotourism facility design, which aimed to enhance their skills to support the ecotourism industry in Fayoum with creative designs for ecotourism facilities and services (ecolodges, visitor centres, camps, etc.) were developed (PS-20; PS-16 and CISS & EDG 2008).

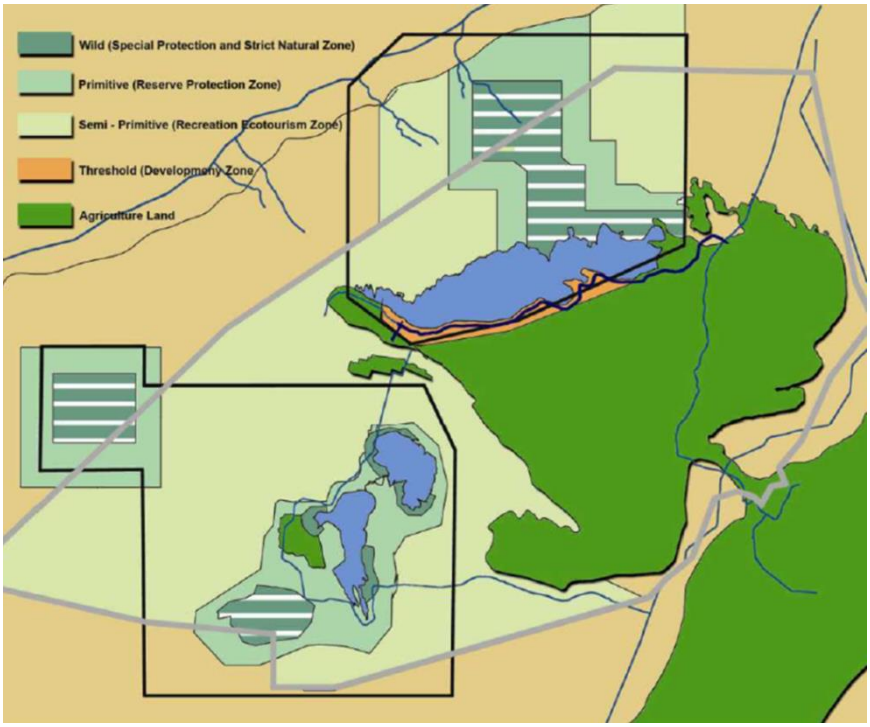


Figure (6-7) The Visitor Experience Zones
Source: CISS and EDG (2008)

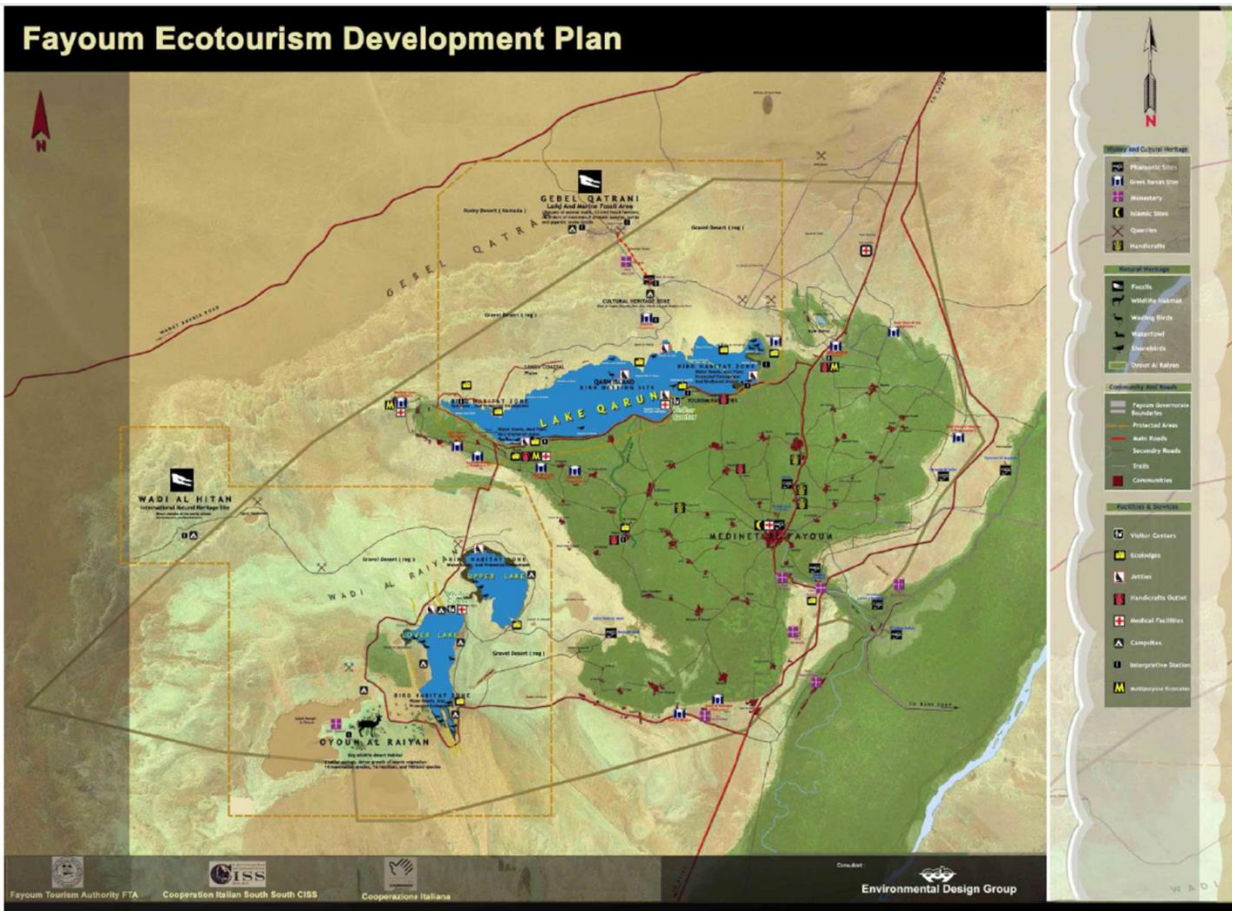


Figure (6-8) The Ecotourism Development Plan
Source: CISS and EDG (2008)

c) The stakeholder involvement activities during the planning process

This part will shed light on the stakeholder involvement activities during the planning process of the FEDP. Various activities for involving the stakeholders during each phase of the planning process were used (see Table 6-1) and are described in more detail:

i) Stakeholder involvement events during the diagnosis phase were focused around four main activities. The first three events (seminar, kick-off workshop and public meeting) involved a wide range of different stakeholder groups because their purpose was disseminating information, clarifying issues and gaining support for the initiative. The final event was informal interviews for groups and individuals, to gather the needed data. They were conducted with three different groups of stakeholders: local communities, representatives of the regional government agencies and artisans. The interviews with artisans were carried out during intensive field visits to craft shops.

ii) There was no stakeholder involvement event during the analysis phase, which was completed by the planning team and steering committee.

iii) During the development phase, only representatives of the regional government agencies and the governorate employees were involved in a workshop to develop the Ecotourism Development plan. At the end of this phase, a public hearing was arranged to consult with all stakeholder groups about the final product.

iv) During the final phase, representatives of the regional government and national agencies were involved in a number of workshops designed to raise their awareness of the principles of ecotourism and the proposed ecotourism development guidelines.

Consequently, it was evident that representative from the regional offices of government agencies and Fayoum employees were involved more than any other stakeholder groups in the planning activities (PS-16).

Table (6-1) Stakeholder involvement activities during the FEDP planning process

Relevant stakeholders but non-participant				√												√			
C	Artisans			√	√														
	NGOs & Local community		√	√	√											√			
B	Private Sector & ETF		√	√												√			
	Regional governmental agencies*, the FG and Municipalities' employees	√	√	√	√			√						√		√		√	√
A	Central government agencies	√																√	
Steering committee**								√						√			√		
Activities of involvement		Seminar	Kick-off workshop	Public meeting	Group & individual interview			Discussion the outcome of the phase						Preparing the plan workshop		Public hearing	Finalise the Ecotourism development plan	Raising awareness workshops	
Initiative time/two months From 2005-2008		2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26	28	30	32	34	36
Initiative phases		Diagnosis phase							Analysis phase				Development phase					Implementation phase	

Source: The author based on EC-1; PS-20; CISS and EDG (2008)

* Representatives of regional office of the Nature Conservation sector in the EEAA, TDA, MOT and MOA

** Steering committee composed from the convener committee and active stakeholders

Stakeholder groups need to be more involved

6.2 The Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative (RSSTI)

6.2.1 The Governorate context

The Red Sea (RSG) is one of the coastal governorates located in the Eastern Desert. It extends 1,080 km along the Red Sea. It is bordered by seven governorates; six of them to the west and one to the north (Figure 6-9). The RSG is one of the largest Governorates, with an area of 203,685 km², which represents about 20.2% of the total area of the country (GOPP 2008). However, the inhabited and the agricultural areas of the RSG are extremely small (0.1% and 0.3% of total RSG area respectively) and nearly 99% of the Governorate is desert. According to the 2006 census the population was 288, 233 (CAPMAS 2006) (only 0.4% of the country's population), with a population density of 2.42 people per km². This is considered very low, compared with the average density of the country as a whole, e.g. the Nile Valley and Delta have 1500 people per km² (CAPMAS 2013).

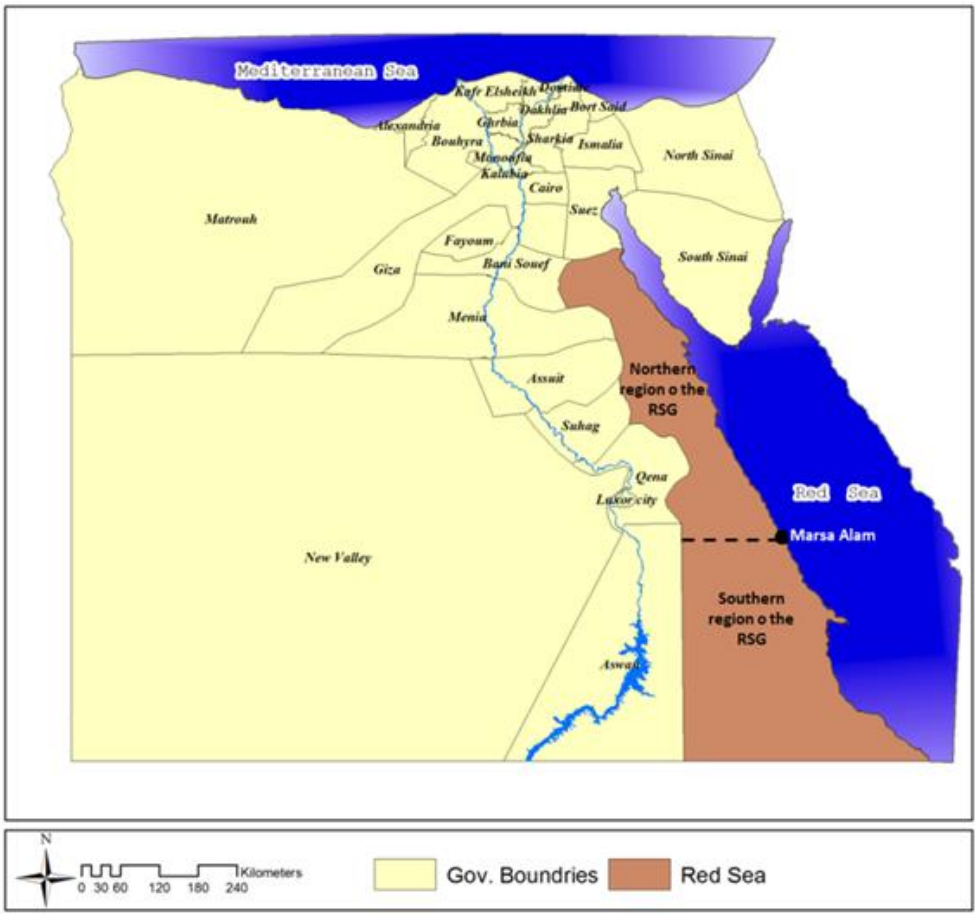


Figure (6-9) The RSG location
Source: The author based on GOPP database (2010)

The RSG can be divided into two main regions based on the levels of development and condition of the natural resources. The first is the Northern area, extending from El-Zafarana city in the north to Marsa Alam city in the south, and is characterised by rapid development due to pressure from tourism, port services, fishing, the aggregate industries and the extraction of petroleum. The majority of these activities are concentrated around Hurghada[42], Safaga and Ras Ghareb. The other region is to the south, extending from Marsa Alam city to the Sudan border. This region is relatively undeveloped and comprises a diverse and pristine rich mixture of territorial, coastal and marine habitats including reefs (GOPP 2008; Ibrahim 2010).

The RSG people can be classified into three groups based on social and cultural characteristics. The first group is itinerant Bedouin tribes who travel across the region on a seasonal basis, such as the Ababdahe and Bicharis. These people travel as individuals or very small nomadic groups passing through the Eastern Desert. A tented camp is their main residence style, established wherever sufficient water and grass are available for their activities. These tribes subsist by means of sheep and camel herding, charcoal production and the collection of medicinal plants (TDA et al. 2003).

The second group consists of settled Bedouin people or fishermen who live in small fishing villages located along the coast of the RS, such as Qulaan and Hamata villages. Their residences are made of wood, cloth, brick and sheet metal for the roof. The traditional boats used by the fishermen are wooden rowing boats (Snyder 2004).

The third group lives in a number of urban communities, located in cities of Hurghada and Marsa Alam or settlements associated with resort and recreation development, such as Kahramana Resort (TDA et al. 2003). The majority are migrants from the Nile Valley and Delta communities searching for job opportunities in the tourism sector.

These three groups offer both positive and negative aspects when considering a collaborative approach to ecotourism development. The positive potentials include: i) there are natural leaders and key actors who can motivate the communities to become

[42] Hurghada is the capital of the northern region.

involved in ecotourism development. Sixty-eight percent of the settlements have a community leader and 30% have an established community centre where social relations and activities can be organised (TDA et al. 2003); and ii) the people, particularly in the first and second groups, respect the natural environment as it represents their source of livelihood (fishing, herding, hunting, materials for handicrafts, etc.). Moreover, the building materials for their residences are environmentally friendly.

However, some factors hinder the emergence of a collaborative approach to ecotourism development: i) the average income of households is low and all family members need to work to survive; ii) only 2.5 % of tourism employees are indigenous people and they are working in low-ranking positions that require no formal qualifications, such as gardening and outdoor cleaning; and iii) a high rate of illiteracy in the first and second groups means that a special effort from the government or developers is required to raise the awareness of local residents regarding the potential for participating in the process (Snyder 2004).

6.2.2 Opportunities and risks for ecotourism development

The RSG has unique, world-renowned marine features including coral reefs[43], marine species[44] and mangroves that are seen as the main attraction for ecotourists to Egypt[45] (Cesar 2003; Chemonics & Environics 2002). In addition, the RSG comprises a vast mountainous wilderness, rare and unique wildlife, and is rich with antiquities (Hilmi et al. 2012). Seven unique ecological zones can be identified (Figure 6-10), each requiring a different level of ecotourism development and appropriate management techniques for their potentials to be realised and unique resources protected (Snyder 2004).

[43] The Egyptian Red Sea now possesses over 4000 km^2 of the most diverse and abundant coral reef ecosystems on Earth (Cesar 2003).
[44] Ten percent of the marine species in the Red Sea are not found anywhere else in the world (Chemonics & Environics 2002).
[45] Ecotourists ranked coral reefs at the first place (73%) when asked about the most enjoyed aspects of their holydays, before climate (58%), beauty of landscape (35%), beaches (31%) and accommodation, services and food (26%) (Jobbins 2006 cited in Hilmi et al. 2012).

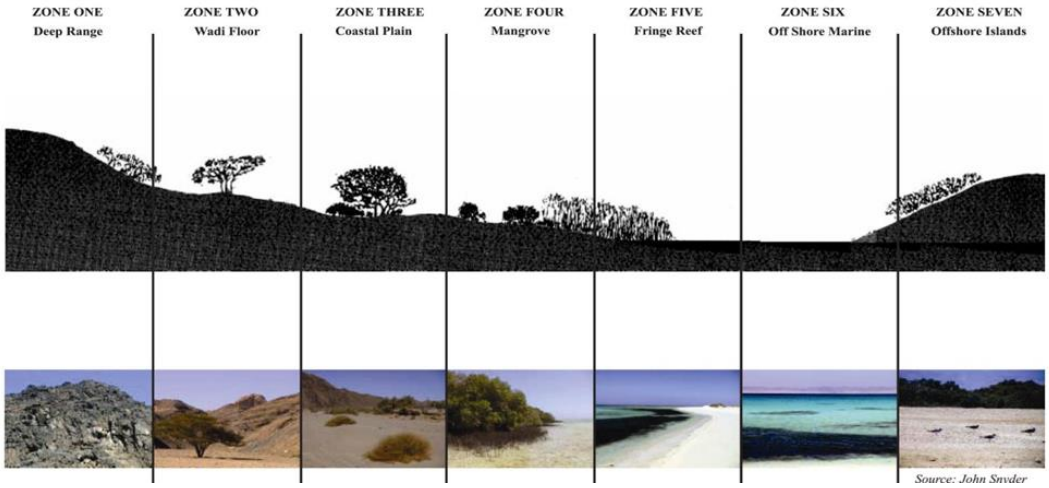


Figure (6-10) Ecological zones in the RSG
Source: Snyder (2004)

Complementing natural assets by centuries of human activities has created a unique cultural and historical legacy. The southern part of the RSG was a significant centre for trade routes linking Asia, Africa, and the Mediterranean Sea for thousands of years. It also has unusual mineral wealth, which enriched several ancient empires. Hence, an integral part of the remarkable history of the region is the culture of the indigenous tribal groups that have inhabited this area for millennia (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

Accordingly, the natural and cultural resources can be categorised into three levels of ecotourism attractions (see Figure 6-11):

i) Focal attractions are attractive enough to motivate tourists to visit them. This level of attraction includes:

- Diving activities associated with the density of marine biodiversity (corals and fish);
- Pharaonic and Roman archaeological sites;
- Desert safari activities (mountain climbing and hiking, desert trekking, horse and camel riding, etc.
- Bird-watching;
- The geological features, which are particularly attractive to nature photographers and geologists.

ii) Secondary attractions alone are not enough to motivate tourists to visit the RSG but they formulate further interest and added value for tourists. They include:

- Wildlife observation in the valleys (fauna and flora);
- Direct contact with community lifestyles (e.g., the Ababda and Bashari tribes);
- Watersports activities (small sailboats, windsurfing, and single-line fishing).

iii) Supporting attractions, which include man-made facilities and services such as ecolodges, interpretive and visitor centres, handicraft centres, camping and picnicking sites, special services for bird-watching, medical services and restaurants, etc. (Snyder 2004; TDA et al. 2003).

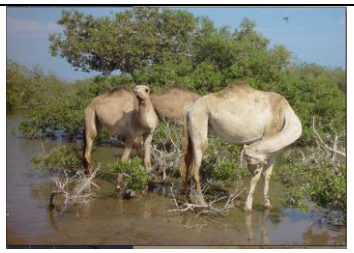



Bird-watching & Coral reefs
Source: TDA et al. (2008)

Mountain climbing & hiking
Source: Snyder (2004)

Examples of focal attractions





Native craft
Sources: Snyder (2004)

Example of flora & fauna
Sources: TDA et al. (2003)

Examples of secondary attractions


Source: TDA et al. (2008)

Sources: TDA et al. (2003)

Examples of supporting attractions

Figure (6-11) The levels of ecotourism attractions in the RSG

Although the RSG has a diversity of resources, there are several risks that may hinder ecotourism development in the area. These include:

- *Over-development of tourism activities along the northern region's Red Sea coast* has resulted in over 40% of diving sites now having less than 30% of their coral cover. Damage to coral has been caused by the tourists using the reefs, such as trampling, coral being broken by divers or snorkelers, boat anchors, boat groundings, etc.; and indirect threats caused by anthropogenic impacts such as sewage run-off, sedimentation following urban construction, dredging, coastal alteration, over-fishing, etc. (Cesar 2003; Hilmi et al. 2012). As a result of this damage, investors are now turning their interests to the southern region of the RS Coast, which has relatively pristine reefs (Chemonics & Environics 2002).

- *The conflict relating to land ownership jurisdictions:* The coastal lands beyond the municipal boundaries are primarily devoted to the tourism development projects under the auspices of the TDA. But these lands are governed by different authorities and ministries[46]. The lack of any coordination mechanisms between these ministries means that investors may need more than 10 approvals to undertake their projects (TDA et al. 2003).

- *Uncontrolled hunting and fishing:* The unique fauna in the RSG is threatened by professional hunters coming from outside the area to collect and sell animals to private collectors or zoos. These uncontrolled activities are destroying wildlife in the RSG (TDA et al. 2003).

- *Climate hazards and other risks:* Ecotourism developers and operators have to recognise that a truly wild place has a variety of natural hazards which need to be taken into account when considering ecotourism development. Including:

  i) *Extreme climatic conditions*: Climate is a significant issue which ecotourism developers need to consider from the perspective of visitor safety and comfort. Extreme heat means that there can only be seasonal use of the RSG desert areas, as the heat will prevent tourists from staying in these areas during the summer months (from May to September). During these months, it can be extremely dangerous to expose ecotourists to the climatic

[46] The main ministries sharing the responsibilities are the Ministry of State for Environment Affairs (MSEA), Ministry of Petroleum (MOP), Ministry of Tourism (MOT), Ministry of Water Resources and Irrigation - Shore Protection Authority (SPA), etc. (Ibrahim 2010).

conditions of the region, as the intense heat conditions can cause dehydration, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Only short day trips may be conducted during early morning and evening hours during the summer period. But from September to March it is possible to safely conduct ecotourism activities throughout daylight with adequate preparation (TDA et al. 2003); and

ii) Other potential risks to humans include: scarcity of water, sand storms, poisonous insects and snakes, and roughness of the terrain. These threats may result in medical emergencies, which can be difficult to deal with in the desert. For example, the evacuation of injured people is complicated, as vehicles are unable to travel safely at high speeds across the rugged terrain (Snyder 2004).

6.2.3 Ecotourism planning initiative

a) The historical context

The tourism development in the RSG evolved during the last two decades with different phases of activities. This section seeks to briefly describe them in order to understand the motive behind the RSSTI.

In 1993, the TDA prepared regional and sector development plans for the RS coast in order to realise the development potentials of this region. These plans aimed to create new growth centres and new investment opportunities. The regional development plan for the RS coast defined five areas for development[47] (TDA et al. 2003). The first phase of the development plan focused on the northern part of the RS region activities based on mass tourism. Pioneer investors successfully established international tourism destinations based on shoreline and marine resort facilities and amenities (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

In 1997, the TDA also designated five zones south of Marsa Alam city as integrated tourism development centres (IDCs). These centres were owned by big

[47] The five main areas from north to south are: Hurghada City, Hurghada to Safaga, Safaga to Quseir, Quseir to Marsa Alam, and Marsa Alam to Ras Banas

companies who prepared their own development plans to help alleviate the burden of plan-making on the TDA (TDA 1998).

By 1998, it was realised that the success of mass tourism had resulted in significant environmental costs, and that this type of development was not sustainable (Chemonics 2006a). The TDA collaborated with both the EEAA and RSG to prepare a study of Red Sea coastal and marine resources to produce a management plan, funded by the World Bank's Global Environmental Facility (GEF). This study aimed at developing the full tourism potential of this area with new activities being based on environmentally sound management practices. The main conclusion of the GEF study was that the intensive development in the northern area of the RSG had not succeeded in combining the protection of natural resources and tourism development into one package (World Bank 2002). From this time onwards, the challenge for the TDA and EEAA became how to produce a development plan that respects and protects the natural assets of the Red Sea yet satisfies the development requirements of Egypt (TDA et al. 2003). The first initiative resulting from this study was the Environmentally Sustainable Tourism (EST) programme, which was funded by USAID, at the end of 1998 to provide an alternative to intensive development. It produced Ecolodge Development Guidelines for Egypt (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

In 1999, the TDA and EEAA were also funded by USAID to develop an ecotourism development approach through the Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative (RSSTI). This initiative, which was completed in 2004, aimed at introducing ecotourism development in the Southern Red Sea Region (SRSR) to promote visitor enjoyment and education about the unique natural, historical and cultural resources in this region while simultaneously conserving their integrity and facilitating regional economic development, including employment opportunities for local communities. The major outcome from this initiative was the development and adoption of environmentally sensitive land use zoning policies and regulations for TDA lands in the SRSR (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

From late 2005 until 2008, the TDA collaborated with both the EEAA and RSG (also funded by USAID) to prepare the Livelihood and Income From

Environment (LIFE) initiative. LIFE's main aim was to enhance local communities livelihood and income through ecotourism development whilst conserving the environment and cultural resources. LIFE concentrated on field actions through implementing pilot projects arising from the RSSTI development plan, and developing supplementary technical studies (see section 6.2.3).

Overall, the RSG has been subjected to more than 75 studies and initiatives dealing directly or indirectly with conservation of environmental resources and ecotourism development in the 20 years up to 2008 (TDA et al. 2008). These initiatives were largely undertaken by the TDA, EEAA and RSG, working individually or together, except for two initiatives which were operationalised by the GOPP. By reviewing the most important initiatives[48], it became clear there was a great deal of duplication as well as conflicts between the proposals. For example, all these initiatives took a long time and involved huge effort to diagnose the current situation of the natural and cultural resources. The same conclusions and suggestions were nearly always delivered by the majority of these initiatives, such as: i) developing a GIS database to show the potentials and challenges for the RSG; ii) conducting training workshops for rangers, local people and EEAA employees about conservation of environmental resources; iii) improving the systems and regulations for environmental impact assessments (EIA) as well as developing best practice process for environmental management and monitoring; and iv) developing guidelines for the development of ecotourism facilities and services such as ecolodge, campsites and ecostation. In other words, the initiatives were duplicating and replicating each other, indicating little horizontal cooperation. Perhaps because of external funding, there was an overemphasis on diagnosis rather than on the implementation of outcomes. It would have been better if each initiative had built on the previous ones and then supplemented the necessary information. Perhaps then more opportunities to enhance implementation could have been the focus of studies, rather than efforts being channelled into carrying out further basic research (PS-10, PS-13 and EC-24).

[48] The research found documents for 10 of the most important initiatives, as Appendix 3 will detail.

Conflicts mainly exist between the GOPP studies and the other initiatives. For example, in 2008 the GOPP proposed within the spatial development strategy for the RSG a group of projects in Wadi El-Gimal National Park (WGNP). These projects, which included a fish and food manufacturing centre, mining centre and fish farming area, were wholly inappropriate because of the environmental sensitivities of WGNP. By contrast, the RSSTI initiative proposed a number of projects in the same place which took into account the sensitivities of the place, notably an eco-activity node, which includes an interpretive station, ecostation, ecolodge and diving sites (EC-22 and EC-23).

b) The contemporary planning process

The RSSTI[49] was considered to be one of the largest ecotourism developments in Egypt, and lasted five years, (1999 to 2004). The RSSTI was located in the SRSR, extending from south of Marsa Alam city to north of Shalateen city and just south of Ras Banas – stretching from the RS coast to the mountain ridgeline in the west (Figure 6-12).

During the initiative, USAID provided technical assistance through the services of several expert contractors. At the end of the programme, it also transferred significant resources to the three main governmental agencies involved (34 million US$ for the EEAA, 26 million US$ for the TDA and 2 million US$ for the RSG). These resources were intended for training and limited equipment purchases, not for implementing components of the plan (EC-20).

The RSSTI brought the Ministries of Tourism, Environment and Education and administration of RSG together in order to promote ecotourism development by adopting an integrated methodology. The overall aim of the RSSTI was to assist in the development and dissemination of environmentally sound activities and facilities through ecotourism development from the design and construction phases to the operational phase. To attain this aim, the planning team of the initiative put forward four objectives, which also represented a mechanism for measuring success: i)

[49] The RSSTI was established under the Egyptian Environment Policy Program (EEPP). This programme focused on development and management of the Red Sea resources, enhancing law enforcement, monitoring and raising public awareness (IUCN et al. 2006).

promoting environmental management by improving the systems and regulations for environmental impact assessments (EIA); ii) strengthening and enhancing environmental monitoring, including putting management and remediation processes in place; iii) building capacity and awareness amongst stakeholders about ecotourism concepts and development; and iv) preparing ecotourism development and land use management plans based on the degree of environmental sensitivity, and identifying the level and type of development suitable for each area (TDA et al. 2003; TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

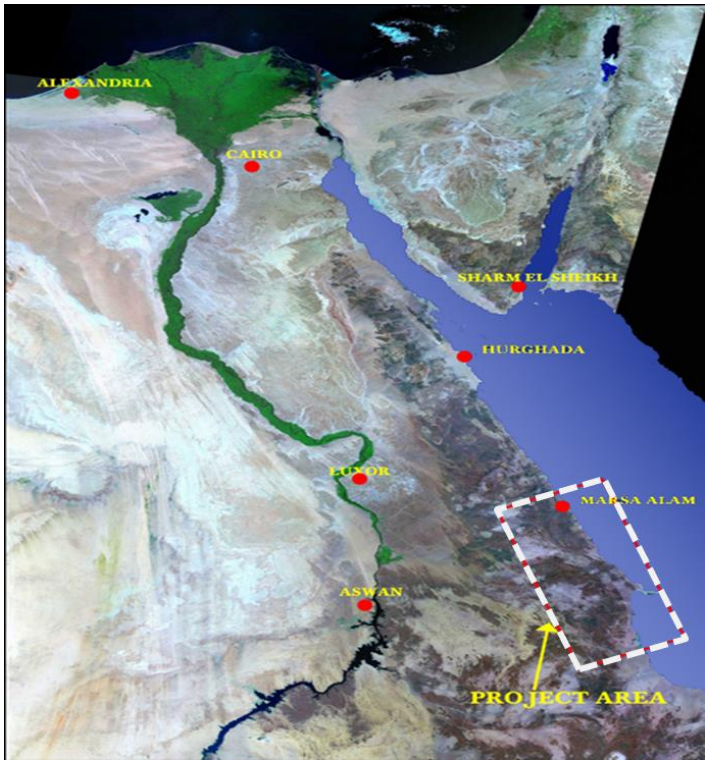


Figure (6-12) The RSSTI location
Source: TDA, USAID and RSSTI (2004)

The USAID planning team proposed several phases of activities during the initiative (1999-2004), which were followed in a sequential manner (see Figure 6-13).

Phase one: preparation

This phase aimed to build a good understanding for the stakeholders about the importance of ecotourism development and the main purposes of the initiative. This phase resulted in more precise information regarding current tourism activities, an ability to better evaluate tourism developments along the RG coast and identifying

pros and cons of existing and potential future ecotourism projects. The first phase included three main activities:

Evaluating ecotourism as an approach to sustainable tourism development: The objective of this activity was to identify the context and the real potential of ecotourism development to expand Egypt's share of the international tourism market, and then for the Egyptian national economy by identifying: i) the main differences between ecotourism and conventional tourism in terms of both the type of facilities and services management and operational techniques required; and ii) the importance of ecotourism for local communities, by providing an effective way to create real economic and social benefits for them, both in terms of job opportunities and respecting their culture.

Evolution of tourism development in the RSG: This activity provided a brief historical overview of tourism development along the Red Sea coast. It described the previous attempts at sustainable tourism development in the last two decades. However this study did not really evaluate the process or outcomes in attempt to identify the main reasons for implementation difficulties (TDA et al. 2003).

Clarifying the purposes of the initiative for stakeholders: This took place through a group of workshops and public meetings for stakeholders. In addition, official discussions were conducted with the governmental authorities to identify the protocols of working between the competent authorities and nominating the coordinators from each one.

The main outcomes from this first phase were: i) determining collaboratively the development goals by consulting all stakeholders; and ii) identifying and agreeing a cooperation protocol between the governmental authorities and USAID.

Phase two: diagnosis

The diagnosis phase contained three main activities in order to better understand the existing characteristics of the Southern Red Sea Region as a preliminary step for decision-making in the production of the ecotourism development plan.

Understanding the socio-economic setting: This activity focused on reviewing and investigating the traditional and new economic activities, and the characteristics

of local communities especially in relation to tourism facilities and services. The main outcome of this activity was a socio-economic assessment and several suggestions as to how greater involvement by local people in tourism development could enhance the existing situation (TDA et al. 2003).

Market assessment: This assessment included an analysis of the international and domestic tourism arrivals over time to the both RS overall and the study area itself and forecast future growth potential, including anticipated tourism revenues and employment opportunities (TDA et al. 2003).

Evaluating environmental and cultural resource settings: The RSSTI team reviewed the climate characteristics, providing an overview of environmental resources (abiotic[50] and biotic[51] resources) of the SRSR, and identified the antiquities and cultural heritage resources. This activity focused on how the antiquities and rich cultural resources of the SRSR could enrich ecotourists' experiences.

Phase three: the analysis

This phase concentrated on a comprehensive analysis of the outputs from the previous phases, aiming to provide valuable information for decision-makers about the opportunities and constraints on ecotourism development in the study area. It contained three main activities:

A sensitivity analysis: Ecological zones and sub-zones were identified based on their natural characteristics. Five ecological zones within each watershed[52] were identified. It was argued that each of these required tourism development and environmental management techniques that were best suited to protect their unique conditions. A sensitivity analysis for each natural sub-zone was undertaken to grade them from the most to the least environmentally sensitive areas. This sensitivity ranking helped produce a land-use zoning plan. Critical areas (very high sensitivity)

[50] Abiotic overview included identifying the settings of Geology, Geomorphology, Soils and Surface Hydrology (Drainage Systems/Watersheds).
[51] Biotic overview included identifying the setting of flora and fauna as well as their status on the IUCN (the World Conservation Union) Red List of Threatened Species (TDA et al. 2003).
[52] A watershed is defined as a major drainage basin comprising one or more sub-basins that serves as a complete water catchment area. The RSSTI team considered that the watershed was the most appropriate and useful definition of an environmental planning unit for the area (Snyder 2004).

requiring protection, and those areas more suitable for development (with minimum environmental impacts), could be broadly defined (TDA et al. 2003).

Development opportunities: This activity identified the three main opportunities for ecotourism development in the SRSR*;* i) the ecotourism attractions (natural, antiquity, and cultural resources) and appropriate access to them; ii) the potential impacts of seasonality for ecotourism, because it has a direct effect on the investors ability to realise a positive return on their investment. The seasonal use map was considered the prime output from this step highlighting the types of ecotourism activities that could be practised in each season throughout the year; and iii) distinguishing ecotourist experiences compared with other types of tourist visitor experiences. By understanding the seasonal use characteristics it was possible to identify tourism experiences that could extend beyond passive viewing of animals or scenery by land, marine, or air to more active participatory activities such as hiking, backpacking, river rafting, kayaking, sport fishing, or mountaineering (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

Development constraints: Here the team focused on environmental hazards to humans, ecosystems and investments that need to be included as essential inputs for the ecotourism development plan. Moreover, they identified the lack of a health and safety infrastructure, which could hinder the development of ecotourism (Snyder 2004).

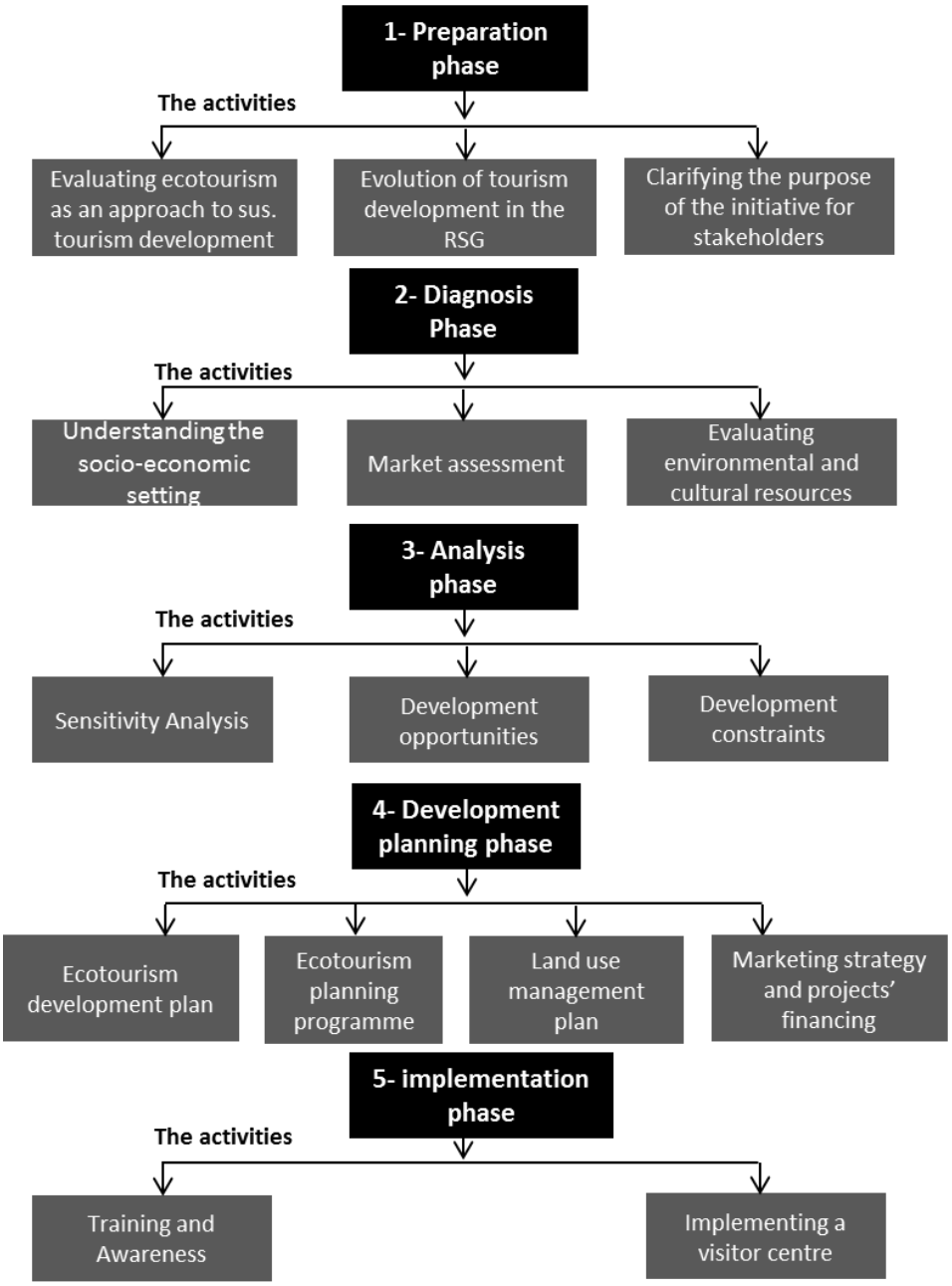


Figure (6-13) The RSSTI phases of activities
Source: The author

Phase four: development planning

This phase resulted in the Ecotourism Development Plan based on the results of the diagnostic and analytical phases. It included the following elements:

Ecotourism Development Plan: The main purpose of this plan was to identify the best use of the land and locate all necessary facilities in relation to each other and in relation to key environmental and cultural factors (TDA & USAID 1998). The ecotourism development plan (Figure 6-14) included five eco-activity nodes, each one

comprising ecolodges, camps, ecostation and interpretive sites. The plan also proposed circulation systems and recreation trails (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

Ecotourism planning programme: The main purpose of this programme was to identify the array of ecotourism experiences to be offered in each sub-zone as well as to determine the tourism activities that would be required (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004). This programme proposed two groups of ecotourism themes, the first based on the natural and cultural heritage features and the second based on marine activities (Snyder 2004).

A land use management plan: A zoning system was used classify the natural sub-zones according to the sensitivity analysis and appropriate activities and services for each zone, such as traditional tourism, ecotourism, mining, and nature conservation, etc. were identified. Each zone specified where and which type of physical services and infrastructure could be provided. The regulations for each zone included permitted and excluded uses, and development guidelines (TDA et al. 2003). An eco-model zone in Qulaan was designed in more detail, as a pilot project, which would be implemented first. The RSSTI team proposed a detailed architecture and landscape design for an ecolodge site within this zone (Figure 6-15), and established guidelines for each component to ease implementation.

Marketing strategy and project financing: After establishing the ecotourism development plan, the initiative identified two significant actions to facilitate implementation. The first one was a marketing strategy focused on how to expand the demand for ecotourism through establishing a twinning relationship between the ecotourism activities and facilities in this region and the international resorts. The second action was to identify the organisations that might finance implementation in general and/or priority projects of the plan, in particular. Whilst the RSSTI suggested various national and international bodies that had the ability to fund the pilot, unfortunately no official agreements were made to obligate these bodies to act (Snyder 2004).

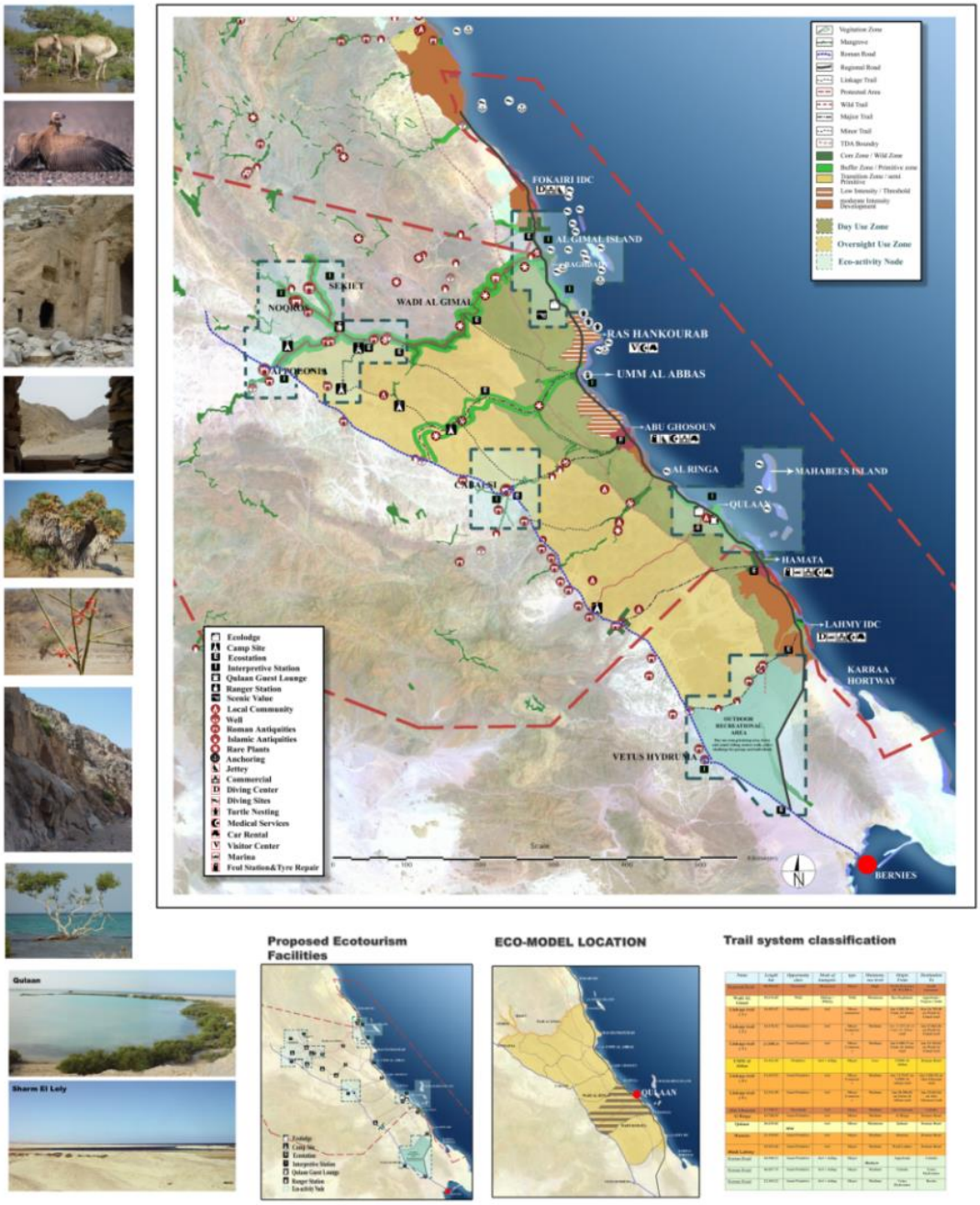


Figure (6-14) Ecotourism Development Plan
Source: TDA, USAID and RSSTI (2004)

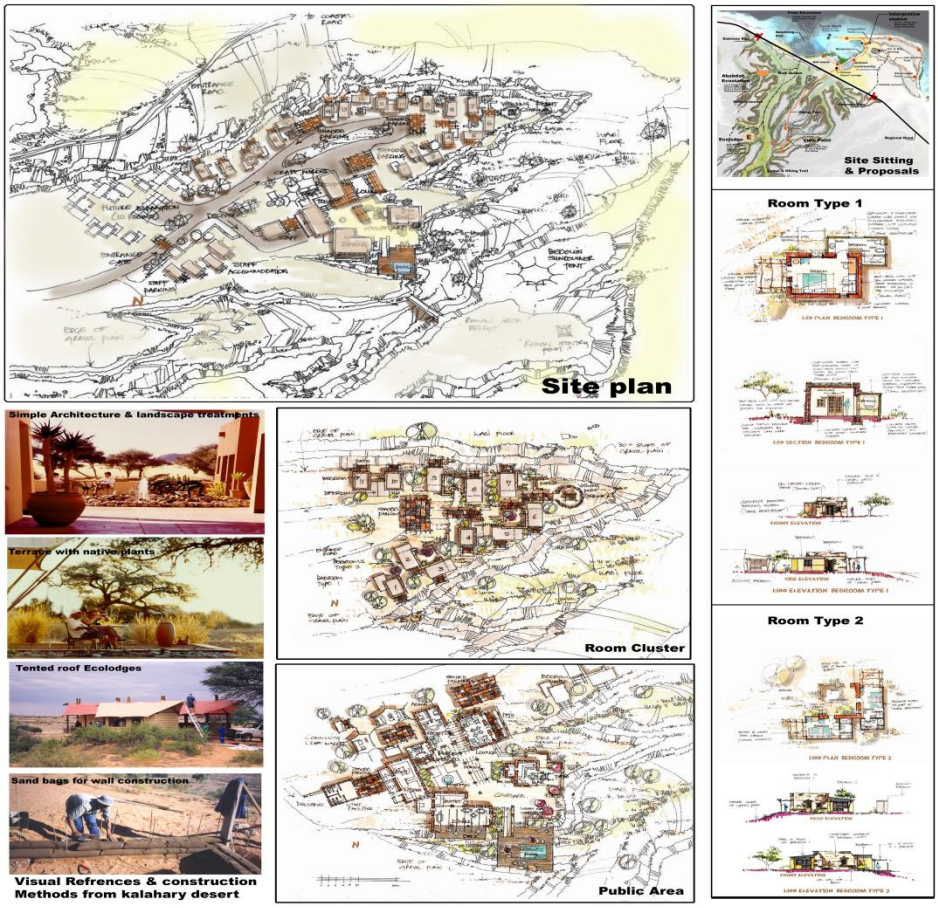


Figure (6-15) Detailed planning and design for ecolodge in Qulaan eco-model zone
Source: TDA, USAID and RSSTI (2004)

Phase five: Implementation and Operational Activities

The operational activities for this initiative took place during two separate periods. The first was during the lifetime of the RSSTI initiative and the second was within the LIFE initiative. Both are described in a little more detail:

Training and Awareness: i) a number of events were organised which might increase awareness of ecotourism concepts and development. These included establishing a group of workshops, training courses and campaigns for tourism development decision-makers, key managers in the hospitality industry, and local communities; ii) an international conference was held in Cairo in May 2003, entitled Sustainable Tourism Egypt (STE 2003), to launch the first integrated environmental guidelines for ecotourism development and market the Egyptian products of ecotourism; and iii) a Green Hotel Campaign was established aimed at key managers in the hospitality industry, to disseminate information increasing environmental awareness and embracing best practice.

A *visitor centre was completed* in Ras Hankourab which aimed to monitor the ecotourists activities, minimise their impacts on the natural resources and promote their understanding and enjoyment of the area.

One year after the RSSTI initiative finished, USAID funded a LIFE initiative, managed by the same governmental authorities and consultants. LIFE tried to implement examples of each component of the designated eco-activities such as campsite, ranger station, visitor entrances and interpretive centres and the trail system (Table 6-2). These were implemented by stakeholders with technical assistance from LIFE staff (Chemonics 2005, 2007). Furthermore, LIFE tried to promote awareness among local communities of ecotourism services through initiating START, a scholarship programme with the regional hospitality school.

Table (6-2) The implementation situation of the RSSTI ecotourism development plan

RSSTI ecotourism development plan		The implementation situation
The plan items	No. of items	
Ecolodge	Two	not implemented
Campsites	Six	Al-Fustat, a safari campsite in the WGNP, was completed in 2005
Ranger station	One	Completed in 2006
Visitor entrances	Four	Two WGNP entrances completed in 2006
Visitor centres	One	Implemented by the RSSTI
Interpretive centres	Twelve	One at the north of the WGNP in 2008
Ecostations	Eleven	Ababdahe Bedouin Ecostation to introduce the local customs, beliefs and traditions, and handicrafts, as well as food and beverages to the visitor. This ecostation was developed in 2007
Services centres (fuel & maintenance)	Two	not implemented
Medical centre	Four	not implemented
Marinas & moorings	Three marinas and two moorings	not implemented
Trail system (major, minor and emergency trails)		LIFE implemented 30 linear km.

Source: The author based on Chemonics (2005, 2007); TDA et al. (2003); TDA, USAID and RSSTI (2004)
The RSSTI implemented one item in the plan (highlighted)

LIFE also prepared a group of supplementary studies and plans for the RSSTI, including: i) a Business Plan for the Wadi El-Gimal National Park; ii) a Destination Management Plan including support promotion, branding and enhancing the competitiveness of SRSR ecotourism in international, regional and local contexts; and

iii) updating the ecolodge and eco-camp development guidelines[53] (Chemonics 2006b, 2007).

c) The stakeholder involvement activities during the planning process

This part will shed light on the stakeholder involvement activities during the planning process of the RSSTI. Various activities for involving the stakeholders during each phase of the planning process were used (see Table 6-3) and are described in more detail.

i) Stakeholder involvement events during the preparation phase were focused around three main activities. The first was an exclusive workshop and field trip designed to train representatives from the regional office of the governmental agencies (TDA, EEAA and RSG) in data collection techniques so that they could collect reliable information about current needs and issues. Two public meetings were held to disseminate information about the potential of the ecotourism development and introduce the initiative to a wide range of stakeholders.

ii) The diagnosis phase focused on gathering information from key stakeholders, particularly the local communities. The majority of the local communities and the managers of existing tourism facilities within the planning area were involved through face-to-face interviews[54]. At the end of this phase, representatives from central government agencies were involved in a workshop to discuss the outcomes from this data collection exercise to understand local natural and cultural resource settings.

iii) During the analysis phase two events were organised. The first event was a Sustainable Tourism Egypt conference focused on ecotourism development more generally and the marketing of Egyptian ecotourism products (EC-22). A wide number of national and international organisations were represented at this conference. The second event was a workshop designed to discuss the outcomes of the analysis stage with representatives of relevant national government agencies.

[53] These guidelines were prepared during the RSSTI initiative one year before the LIFE project commenced (EC-23 and EC-24).

[54] The survey and interviews for 19 settlements, (eight villages and 11 small settlements) comprising 194 families with 928 individuals, were conducted by a socio-economic team composed of senior social scientists and experienced field researchers (TDA et al. 2003)

iv) During the development phase, stakeholder involvement was concerned with two main issues. The first was raising environmental awareness through workshops and campaigns aimed at different groups of stakeholders. Secondly, a public hearing was conducted to consult with specific stakeholder groups around the context of the draft plan before a final consultation to agree the final vision of the plan took place between national government agencies.

v) Following the development of the plan, key managers in the hospitality industry, as representatives of the private sector were involved in the Green Hotel Campaign designed to enable existing hotels to adapt and follow the green hotel guidelines (TDA et al. 2003). At the end of the initiative, regional government and the Governorate employees were represented at a workshop 'Environmental Monitoring Checklists' designed to promote and evaluate visitor activities and overall satisfaction.

In parallel to the involvement events mentioned above, a factsheet was produced every six months to keep the governmental agencies updated with the planning progress.

Table (6-3) Stakeholder involvement methods during the RSSTI planning process

Relevant stakeholders but non-participant			√							√									
Teachers												√							
NGOs			√							√			√						
Local community		√	√	√	√							√		√					
Regional governmental agencies and the RSG Employees	√	√	√									√		√	√			√	
Central government agencies		√	√				√			√	√		√	√	√	√		√		
Private Sector		√	√		√					√					√			√		
Steering committee							√			√	√		√			√				
Activities of involvement	Data collection training (workshop & field trips)	Seminar	Public meeting	Surveyed the 19 settlements	Individual interview		Discussion on the outcome of the phase			STE conference*	Workshop of discussion on the outcome of the phase	Raising environmental awareness campaign	Workshop to modify the plan & identify guidelines	Awareness for Environmental Management System (EMS)	Public hearing (consultation)	Workshop to finalise the Ecotourism development plan		Green Hotel Campaign	Monitoring & management of resources	
Initiative time/months From 1999-2004	4	# 6	8	# 12	16	20	# 24	# 30	32	#38	40	42	#44	46	48	# 50	52	54	# 56	60
Initiative phases	Preparation phase			Diagnosis phase				Analysis phase				Development phase					Implementation phase			

Source: The author based on Snyder (2004); TDA et al. (2003)
Fact sheet every six months
* National and international bodies were involved
Stakeholders need to be more involved

6.3 Ecotourism for Sustainable Development in the New Valley Governorate (ESDNVG)

6.3.1 The Governorate context

The NVG is the biggest governorate in the country in terms of area, at 376,505 km², representing more than 37% of the country's area. It is located to the south-west of the country, and shares international borders with Libya, to the west, and Sudan, to the south. Its internal boundaries are shared with the governorates of El-Menia, Giza and Marsa Matrooh in the north and Asyut, Suhag, Quena and Aswan in the east (Figure 6-16) (CISS & EDG 2012; GOPP & ECO-PLAN 2012). The NVG comprises four significant oases, Kharga, Dakhla, Farafra and Paris.

The inhabited and the agricultural areas in the oases represent an extremely small ratio (0.05% and 0.2% respectively) of total NVG area and nearly 99.75 % of the Governorate is desert. According to the 2006 census, the population was 178,325 (only 0.25% of the country population), with a population density of 0.5 people per km² (CAPMAS 2006). It is very small compared with the average density of the country as a whole (GOPP & ECO-PLAN 2012).

The social and cultural characteristics of the NVG people can be classified into three groups. The first group is itinerant Bedouin tribes (see section 6.2.1)[55]. The second group combines the characteristics of settled Nomadic people and farmers. They live in small separated settlements or villages, such as Nasser and Bashandi. The residences are made from mud and brick with wooden roofs. The main economic activities are agriculture, collection of medicinal plants, and traditional handicrafts (producing carpets, blankets and spinning wool) (SIS 2013b). The third group consists of four semi-urban communities, such as Kharga (the capital of NVG) and Farafra City. The majority of the inhabitants of these communities are migrants from the region searching for better job opportunities. There are two building styles: a conventional complex, with walls made from mud or red brick with a wooden or concrete roof, and modern buildings with a concrete skeleton and many floors (GOPP & ECO-PLAN 2012).

[55] Its characteristics are similar to the first group in the Red Sea Governorate.

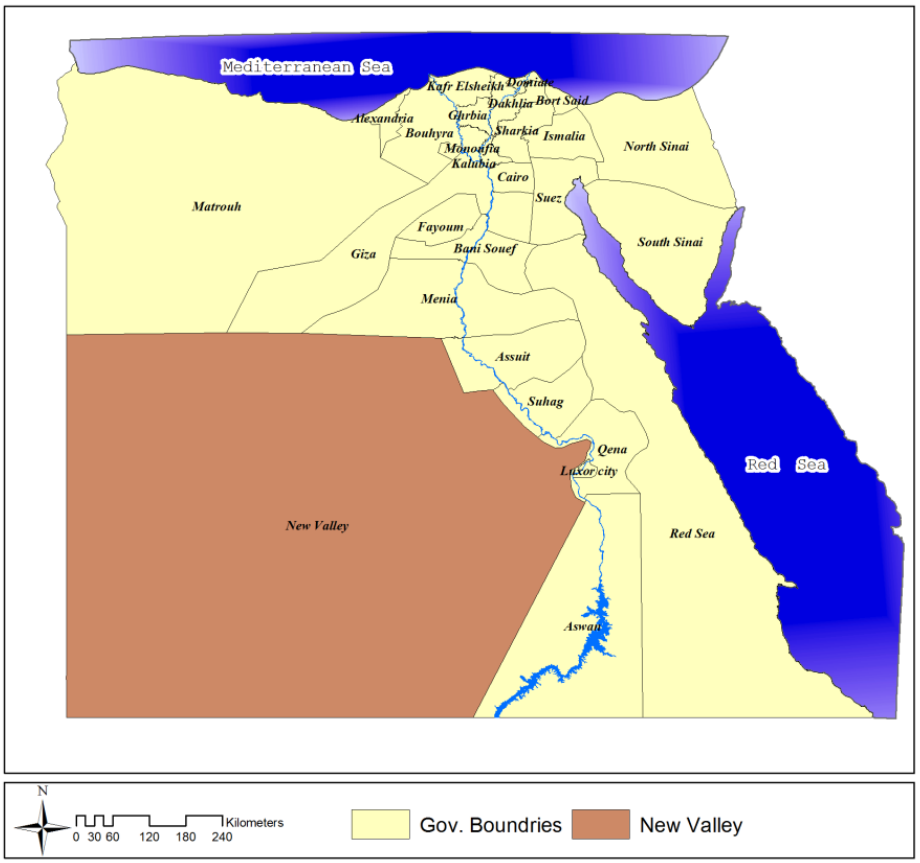


Figure (6-16) The NVG location
Source: The author based on GOPP database (2010)

The characteristics of these groups are similar to those in the RSG and generally they have strong propensity[56] to support and engage in ecotourism development proposals (CISS & EDG 2012; Snyder 2004).

6.3.2 Opportunities and risks for ecotourism development

This part will shed light on the opportunities that facilitate the ecotourism development and the risks that hinder this development, as follows:

The NVG includes several historical, natural and cultural features which have considerable ecotourism potential, for example, numerous ruined Pharaohs' temples, Roman forts, monasteries and ancient cemeteries, prehistoric settlements and ancient tracks, and the cultural heritage is represented in the conservative lifestyle, which make NVG oases unique among the northern African great Sahara Desert oases (CISS & EDG 2012). The NVG attractions can be divided into three categories:

[56] This willingness was realised from interviewing the local people during the ESDNVG initiative and during this research fieldwork.

i) Focal Attractions, include:

- The White Desert Park, which is characterised by magical landscape, sand dunes, and shining white limestone geological formations;
- The ruins of a Roman fortress and the oldest Christian cemetery in the world at Kharga Oasis; and
- The desert safari (including desert trekking, horse and camel riding, etc.) into the Great Sand Sea.

ii) Secondary Attractions, which include:

- Natural cool and hot springs which are considered popular bathing places for locals and ecotourists;
- The geological features, which are particularly attractive to photographers and geologists; and
- Observing the diverse and unique flora and fauna in the oases.

iii) Supporting Attractions, which include:

- Ecotourism facilities and services such as hotels, resorts, museums, retail, and entertainment facilities.

In addition, the strategic location of NVG oases provides the opportunity of acting as a gateway to the north African desert oases that stretch from Egypt to Morocco. NVG oases offer the potential of being an important component of a regional trans-desert safari making accessible the Egyptian, Libyan, Tunisian, Algerian and Moroccan oases (CISS & EDG 2012).

Ecotourists will be able to access the NVG either by: i) air – Kharga and Dakhla already have airports that are able to accept various sizes of aircraft. Kharga is currently already receiving limited scheduled commercial flights but has a significant opportunity to increase its capacity and receive direct chartered flights from Europe. This could be a catalyst for ecotourism development; or ii) road from Asyut, within three hours, or Luxor, within four hours[57]. The area can also be reached from Cairo by road, which takes eight hours. These road trips could be part of desert adventure excursions on desert tracks (CISS & EDG 2012; GOPP & ECO-PLAN 2012).

[57] Asyut and Luxor are considered the two main access centres for the Upper Egypt (the south part of the state) region. They have scheduled domestic and international flights.

The white desert park

The archaeological sites

Examples of focal attractions

Natural cool and hot springs

Local handicrafts

Examples of secondary attractions

Tarfa lodge

Desert lodge

Examples of supporting attractions

Figure (6-17) The levels of ecotourism attractions in the NVG
Source: CISS and EDG (2012)

Although the NVG has a diversity of opportunities, there are several issues that that have limited ecotourism development in the area. Some of the issues are comparable to those in the FG, such as limited capacity amongst the local workforce, lack of tourism facilities, and weaknesses in the tourism market. Some are similar to those in the RSG, such as natural hazard and a lack of emergency services. To avoid repetition, only new issues will be discussed:

The absence of an inventory of NVG resources: Although the NVG resources are valuable and unique, they are not well known. Most tourists currently leave with little understanding of the area's natural significance or without an appreciation of the themes that give perspective to the value of this natural habitat. So a main objective of the ESDNVG initiative was to compile an inventory assessing the importance of the natural and cultural resources as the first step for ecotourism development.

The declining value of local culture: The local culture and architecture, which can be considered as one of the key pillars of any potential ecotourism development, are gradually falling into a state of disrepair and/or disappearing. Conventional buildings have been replaced with modern styles. Unclean, unhygienic conditions surrounding some ancient fortified towns detracting from their attractiveness, and the majority of recent tourism activities have been driven by external forces with limited appreciation of the local communities' culture (CISS & EDG 2012). To alleviate these negative elements, developers should: i) involve local communities in developments to preserve their culture; and ii) valorise the archaeological sites and put them on tourist itineraries in order to provide fees for their maintenance (EC-26).

The impacts of the mines and quarries: The expansion of the mining activities in the NVG has caused environmental stress and, critically, the destruction of specific historical sites such as Labkha Palace. The impacts of the mining – air and noise pollution and the disturbance caused by truck traffic – are incompatible with the ecotourism activities. Mining activities require proper management in order to mitigate their negative effects.

Intrusive security management: Security restrictions also currently challenge ecotourism development potential in the NVG. All tour operators have to be accompanied by police protection, and often the experiences are hampered by an intrusive police presence. Military permits increase the complication of this problem, where permission for long desert tours must be procured in Cairo and sometimes this can take a long time. Consequently, a number of ecotourists are known to have cancelled their visits. An intrusive security management process is a common complaint from both international and local tour operators (CISS & EDG 2012).

6.3.3 Ecotourism planning initiative

a) The contemporary planning process

The ESDNVG lasted for 30 months, from January 2010 to the end of June 2012, and focused on the main sites with ecotourism potential within the NVG, Farafra, Dakhla, and Kharga oases (Figure 6-18).

The project was exclusively funded by the Italian Egypt Debt for Development Swap Programme. It cost 3,705 million EGP (€527,000). The initiative was undertaken by the CISS in partnership with the New Valley Governorate, which was represented by the New Valley Tourism Authority (NVTA). They involved a significant number of stakeholders, which included the Administration of Nature Conservation Sector of EEAA, Regional Office of MOT, Regional Office of Minister of Antiquities (MOA), local police and security agencies, NGOs, teachers, entrepreneurs, local people, artisan, tourism businesses and investors (CISS 2011).

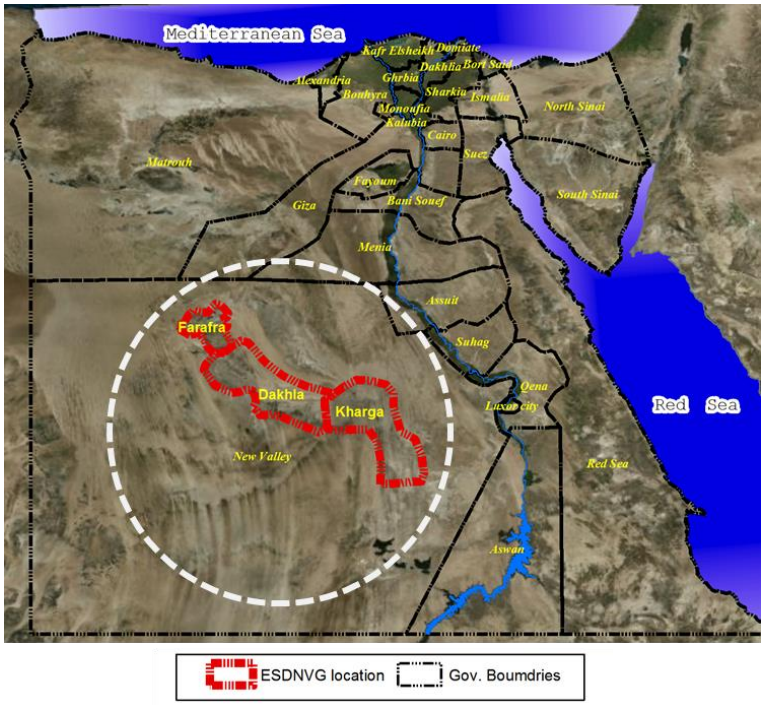


Figure (6-18) The ESDNVG location
Source: The author based on GOPP database (2010)

The ESDNVG was initiated to improve the livelihood of communities in the NVG through ecotourism development and a more effective management of environmental and cultural resources. It also aimed to promote the attractiveness of the New Valley's oases by including them within the main ecotourism routes. To

attain these aims, the initiative put forward a number of objectives (CISS & EDG 2012) including:

- Compiling an inventory of the New Valley's natural and cultural resources, including heritage sites, geological landscape formations of significance, wildlife species and habitats;
- Promoting ecotourism activities in the NVG by presenting these resources as part of integrated itineraries;
- Contributing to poverty reduction though generation of ecotourism-based economic activities organised, managed and owned by local people;
- Raising the awareness of both ecotourists and their hosts about the importance of preserving natural and cultural assets; and
- Developing the desert interpretation skills of Egyptian tour guides.

The CISS planning team proposed four phases of activities to accomplish these objectives (see Figure 6-19).

Phase one: data collection and inventory of ecotourism resources

This phase aimed to build a database of ecotourism resource potential in the NVG. This database was to provide basic information to decision-makers in subsequent phases. The inventory contained three elements:

Natural and cultural heritage resources: Through a detailed review of existing literature, combined with field survey through the main three NVG oases[58], the team was able to develop an inventory of natural and cultural heritage resources. This was categorised into three groups: i) natural heritage resources (Palaeontology, Geology and soils, Landforms and Natural landscape, Climate, Flora and Fauna); ii) historical and archaeological resources (Pharaohs, Greek-Roman, Coptic and Islamic features); and iii) traditional handicrafts which could be considered as expressive of the history and traditions of local people (such as baskets, pottery and carpets, etc.) (CISS & EDG 2012).

[58] GPS readings were utilised to compensate for the limitations of the available maps and to cross-reference with existing documentation.

Socio-economic context: This activity focused on reviewing and investigating local community characteristics from several perspectives, including the education, capacity of labour force and the availability of healthcare provision (CISS 2013a).

The market profile: The main conclusion from an analysis of the existing demand for, and supply of, ecotourism in the NVG was that demand was market-dependent[59] and tended to be seasonal. It was characterised by short-stay, one-day trips with the majority (80%) of the current supply of tourism facilities and services being located in Dakhla and Kharga oases (CISS 2010; CISS & EDG 2012).

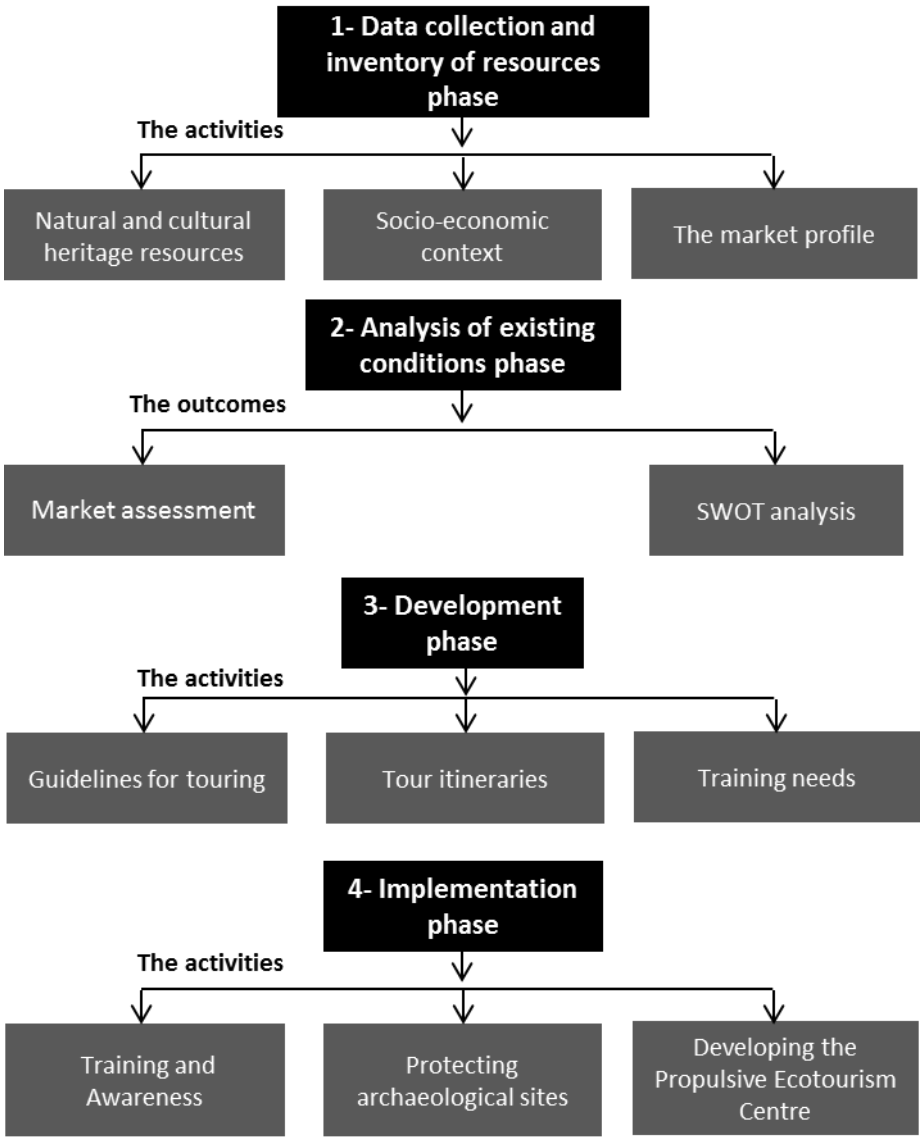


Figure (6-19) The ESDNVG phases of activities
Source: The author

[59] The NVG attractions are not well known enough to motivate the tourism agencies to put them as main destinations. The majority of visitors to the NVG put it as a quick stop (usually one day) during their tour itineraries.

Phase two: analysis of existing conditions

The analysis was undertaken in partnership with relevant stakeholders. The second phase outcomes consisted of:

SWOT analysis to identify the NVG opportunities and strengths for promoting ecotourism development and explore weaknesses and threats which hinder ecotourism development. SWOT is an important technique in planning processes designed to help planners and decision-makers with the next steps. The most important benefit of the NVG SWOT analysis was that it was built by the stakeholders (CISS & EDG 2010).

A market assessment: This activity aimed to evaluate the current demand and supply of the existing market, by evaluating current tour package offerings, the saleability of these packages, price comparisons and value for money, etc. Important conclusions which assisted in the production of future visitor themes were: i) the current packages in the NVG combined hard and soft ecotourism activities; and ii) there were two groups offering tour packages in the NVG oases: local individual guides and experts, and tour operators specialising in ecotourism. Both had solid experience and international reputations (CISS & EDG 2012).

Phase three: development

This phase proposed future ecotourism development projects based on the results of the inventory and analytical phases. Rather than building new physical infrastructure per se, promoting the potential through softer less capital-intensive projects was suggested. These included:

Guidelines for touring: This activity focused on special instructions that are required for ecotourists, guide personnel, specialised vehicles and equipment through desert safari tours. The guidelines for tour operators, tour guides and ecotourists were based on the feedback from the best practice exchange events (CISS & EDG 2011).

Tour itineraries: One of the main outcomes of this initiative was to provide samples of the best possible model itineraries designed for tour operators and local guides (Figure 6-20). The ecotourist experiences within these proposed itineraries offered a wide range of tours, each emphasising a specific aspect of the safari experience such as nature and landscape, history and archaeology, local lifestyle and

adventure. They were very sellable to a wide spectrum of target clients. The tours were flexible to allow the operator to tailor them to meet client needs, both in terms of length of the tour and the nature of the activities (CISS & EDG 2011).

Figure (6-20) Sample of proposed ecotourism itineraries
Source: CISS and EDG (2011)

Training needs: After proposing the itineraries, the team defined the training needs of all those engaged in delivering ecotourism activities (staff agency, local guides, local architects and artisans) to help support the activities themselves, support ecotourism operations and protect the resources in the NVG oases (CISS & EDG 2012).

Phase four: implementation and operational activities

Operational activities were completed during the lifetime of the initiative. The main outcomes included:

Training and Awareness: The CISS believed that human resource development in the ecotourism industry provided a significant challenge. Therefore, during this phase further events and strategies designed to address this problem were organised: i) a capacity-building activity for eight selected people from the public sector to manage the Propulsive Ecotourism Centre and the initiative's website. This was a 10-day workshop designed to improve participants' computing skills, use of the internet, use of the NVG ecotourism Resources Database, and organisational communication and marketing skills (CISS 2012b); ii) the CISS issued a six-monthly newsletter highlighting recent achievements, plans for the next six months and explaining the challenges facing the initiative. (CISS 2010, 2012a, 2012b); and iii) a New Valley

cultural week was held in the Italian Cultural Institute of Cairo which aimed to highlight the traditions of the local culture and the publication of a complete database (CISS 2012b). The main participants included representatives drawn from local artisans, NGOs, the private sector, and the central offices of national government agencies. Italian representatives included the ambassador and the directors of the Italian Cooperation and Italian Cultural Institute.

Protecting archaeological sites: The purpose of this intervention was to prevent and minimise further deterioration of archaeological sites. Qasr el-Labkha was used as a pilot project and strategies included: i) constructing vehicle barriers using local materials to prevent cars from driving over fragile areas of the site; and ii) providing visitor signage for information and orientation (CISS 2012b).

The Propulsive Ecotourism Centre was developed: The stakeholders agreed that a handicrafts centre in Kharga City should be developed. It was called the Propulsive Centre. This centre was designed to have three main functions: i) an ecotourist information centre properly equipped with a database of ecotourism resources so that it could distribute information materials to visitors; ii) a handicrafts promotion centre to illustrate the main handicraft techniques in the NVG and to give visitors the opportunity to view and buy handicraft products; and iii) an exhibition centre to host fairs and carnivals for promoting ecotourism in the NVG (CISS 2012a, 2012b).

b) The stakeholder involvement activities during the planning process

This part will shed light on the stakeholder involvement activities during the planning process of the ESDNVG. Through reviewing its documents and the outcomes of the first stage of the interview, it can be seen (Table 6-4) that each phase of ESDNVG activities was based, to some degree, on stakeholder involvement in events to both raise awareness and build their commitment to the initiative and its outcomes. The activities for involving the stakeholders during each phase were as follows:

i) During the preparation phase: Several interviews with groups and individuals who represented a wide range of stakeholders from local and national levels – for example, public sector and governorate leaders, the Nature Conservation sector of the

EEAA, regional offices of MOT and MOA, hoteliers, artisans, teachers, students, investors, ecotourists, and local people – were conducted. The outputs from these discussions included an agreement on the need for an ecotourism plan, the importance of infrastructure and service improvement, and the need for marketing support. The interviewees also advocated that more collaborative actions between the public and private sector were urgently required. A public meeting also was held to introduce the initiative to a wide range of stakeholders.

ii) During the analysis phase: An awareness-raising campaign was the main activity undertaken designed to involve stakeholders. It was targeted at four main groups of stakeholders (NGOs and artisans, teachers and students, public sector, and private sector) through workshops held over 14 days[60]. It used a variety of techniques to enhance stakeholder performance during these workshop discussions. For instance, learning sessions were used to teach the stakeholders how to build the SWOT analysis. Furthermore, the convener divided the participants into small discussion groups to hear all their voices during the discussion (CISS & EDG 2010). Moreover, during this campaign questionnaires were completed by the participants to evaluate the existing situation of tourism activities in the NVG.

iii) During the development phase: Best Practice Exchange events were conducted to share experience between the participants (craftspeople, tourism authority civil servants and local tourist guides from both the NVG and Fayoum Government). Overall, three exchange events took place. The first event comprised several workshops over four days for craftspeople from both Governorates. They worked together, showing each other the different and similar techniques they each used. The second exchange training event was held between civil servants drawn from the tourism authorities in both Governorates. In this workshop, the Fayoum representatives used their experience to illustrate the results of the capacity-building and technical assistance processes for the sustainable management of the

[60]This campaign was divided into each NVG oasis: Kharga oasis campaign: six days (two days for the NGOs and artisans, two days for teachers and students, and two days for public and private sectors). Dakhla campaign: four days (two days for teachers and students, one day for the NGOs and artisans, and one day for public and private sectors). Farafra campaign: four days (two days for teachers and students, one day for the NGOs and artisans, and one day for public and private sectors) (CISS & EDG 2010). The total beneficiaries in the three oases were **475** teachers and students, **150** employees in the tourism sector and **180** artisans.

environmental and artistic cultural heritage as a mechanism for promoting ecotourism. The last exchange training was for tour guides, which lasted three days, and involved the Fayoum representatives describing the training they had received – theoretical and practical – in relation to ecology, archaeology, history and communication skills. Then the participants were divided into two groups containing tour guides from both Governorates, to undertake field visits to some archaeological sites, where each group was asked to alternately guide the other group and interpret the site while each participant was asked to take notes about the other group's technique (CISS 2012a).

iv) The implementation phase included two activities to involve the stakeholders, as mentioned earlier, capacity-building workshops for public sector representatives and the New Valley cultural week.

Consequently, the local communities, teachers and students, ecotourists, the private sector and central office of the national government agencies need to be more involved in the process to enhance the likelihood of plan implementation.

Table (6-4) Stakeholder involvement methods during the ESDNVG process

Ecotourist		√																	
Teachers and students		√						√											
NGOs and artisans		√	√	√				√			√	√			√		√		
Local community		√	√	√															
Regional office of the governmental agencies, the NVG and municipalities of oases Employees		√		√				√			√	√					√		
Central government agencies		√													√				
Private Sector		√		√				√				√			√				
Activities of involvement	Convening a team meeting to prepare for the initiative **	Several interviews	Field survey for the main oases	Kick-off workshop			Convening team meeting to finalise the database	Questionnaire / Workshops* / Awareness-raising campaign			Series of work shops / Field trips / Best Practice Exchange		Convening a team meeting to finalise the outcomes		New Valley Cultural Week		Capacity-building workshop		
Initiative time/two months From 1/2010 to 06/2012	2		4		# 6	8	10	# 12	14	16	# 18		20	22	#24	26	28	30	
Initiative phases	Data collection & inventory of resources phase							Analysis phase			Development phase				Implementation phase				

Source: The author based on CISS (2012a, 2012b); CISS and EDG (2012)
* Interactive informal technique, role acting and dream techniques were used
** The convening committee was the steering committee
# Newsletter every six months
Stakeholders need to be more involved

6.4 Conclusion

This chapter has described the context of each of three ecotourism initiatives as background to a more detailed empirical analysis.

Overall, a number of similarities and difference in approach are evident. All took a long time and considerable efforts (50% or more of each initiative timeframe) to diagnose and analyse the current situation regarding the natural and cultural resources, and generally they delivered similar conclusions and suggestions, such as the need to conduct training workshops or courses mainly for representatives of the governmental agencies and the need to develop guidelines for ecotourism activities. Often they ignored previous ecotourism development attempts in their location in identifying the issues for the plan implementation. This was evident in both the FEDP and RSSTI initiatives. With regard to stakeholder involvement activities during the planning process, all three initiatives increased inclusiveness, although different stakeholder groups were involved in different activities using a variety of techniques during their planning process. However, in all the initiatives, representatives of the government agencies were involved more than others. Local communities, NGOs and the private sector still need to be more involved in the process to enhance the likelihood of plan implementation.

On the other hand, there were significant differences between the initiatives. For example, with the RSSTI initiative, it was the only one that devoted the first eight months to the preparation stage. This was to pave the way for the planning activities by clarifying to the stakeholders the importance of ecotourism as an alternative approach to sustainable development, which was the main purpose of the initiative. The ESDNVG initiative did not produce an ecotourism development plan per se but focused on proposing effective action, such as designing the best model for tour itineraries as a sample of what could be done and actually creating the Propulsive Ecotourism Centre to boost ecotourism development in the NVG. It might have been better if a development plan had been proposed combining these actions to facilitate sustainability and accelerate their success.

Critical evaluation of these initiatives against the conceptual framework will be provided in the next chapter.

Chapter Seven: Evaluation and analysis of Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives

Chapter Seven:

Evaluation and analysis of Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives

This chapter will examine and evaluate three Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives through the lens of the conceptual framework outlined in Chapter Three. Suggestions regarding how to enhance the ecotourism planning process will be explored in the next chapter. This chapter is structured around four main parts. The first part (7.1) investigates the stakeholder network building process. The second part (7.2) examines stakeholder engagement including the level of participation and the procedures for motivating and preparing stakeholder engagement. Part three (7.3) covers the procedures of evaluation used during the Egyptian initiatives. The final part (7.4) identifies the obstacles that may hinder stakeholder involvement and collaboration during the planning process.

7.1 Stakeholder network building

The building of a stakeholder network is the cornerstone of efficient communication between the actors and structures the negotiations throughout a collaborative planning process (GIZ 2011). Therefore building a sufficiently varied stakeholder network provides greater opportunity to build a consensus about their conflict issues and develop effective solutions (Gray 1989). This step requires great effort to identify the critical key stakeholders, build the network, and then manage their relationships. This evaluation, using the case studies, focuses on four main components:

1) Identifying the convener of the network;

2) Identifying and analysing stakeholder groups and their delegates who participated in the planning process;

3) Evaluating the dialogue between stakeholder representative groups (SRs) and their parent bodies; and

4) Identifying factors influencing the network efficiency.

Each component will be analysed through a combination of documentary reviews and interviews with key stakeholders and independent experts associated with each case study.

7.1.1 The network conveners

The convener, as was discussed in Chapter Three, is one of the most important factors in building a stakeholder network, because the main role of the convening team is identifying and analysing the stakeholders as well as facilitating and managing relationships to build consensus through the collaborative planning process (Jamal & Stronza 2009). To be more specific, the discussion in this section is based on answering the questions (Table 3-5): How have the conveners been identified? What are their critical characteristics?

Egyptian initiatives for ecotourism planning have been convened by multi-actor conveners usually including representatives of the main central or regional governmental agencies concerned with tourism development in the region and representatives of the funders and their planning consultancy teams (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012; Snyder 2004). From the case studies, two different convener models were identified. In the FEDP and the ESDNVG initiatives, the convening group was fairly small and locally oriented and encompassed a representative from the regional tourism agencies (Fayoum Tourism Authority (FTA) and New Valley Tourism Authority (NVTA)) and representatives of Cooperation Internationale Süd-Süd (CISS) – representing the funder and the leader of the planning consultancy team who had experience in mediating meetings and workshops during the planning process (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012). In this regard, one of the interviewees reflected the view of several others: *"The funder, CISS, agreed with the FTA that the convening team should include three people: a representative of each [FTA and CISS] in addition to a technical person who had long experiences with tourism development in Fayoum"* (PS-20)[61].

[61] A reference to the interviewee/s: the acronyms refer to the interviewee groups: EC= Experts & Consultants in ecotourism development or participatory planning, PS = An employee in the Public Sector, PrS =

The second approach, which was adopted by the RSSTI initiative, was to have a much wider team, including representatives of the central offices of the TDA and EEAA, a delegate of the PA[62], and one Egyptian consultant, who was nominated by the PA (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004). But this convening team did not involve any representatives from the local level (RS region) whether governmental agencies, consultants or stakeholders (Snyder 2004).

According to Gray (1989) and others, the convening team for such a complex domain as ecotourism development should have power and legitimacy derived from their formal office, a longstanding, trusted reputation and experience of being an unbiased expert on the problem. These criteria were attained in the convening teams of all three Egyptian initiatives studied. In this respect, one of the interviewees emphasised that "*The power and legitimacy was attained within the convening teams by including representatives of governmental authorities in the regional level [such] as FTA and NVTA in FEDP and ESDNVG respectively or national level [such] as EEAA and TDA in RSSTI, as well as experts in the ecotourism development*" (EC-1).

Although the formal office often gives the convener power and legitimacy to bring the stakeholders to the table in many developing countries such as Brazil, Guatemala and Peru (Bonilla 2003), in Egypt including a government representative in the convening team often discourages stakeholders (particularly local communities and the private sector) from attending or participating in these meetings for two main reasons. First, government representatives are not neutral and they have traditionally oriented stakeholders to specific options through the negotiation process, and therefore the final decision does not reflect stakeholder views. In this regard, one interviewee remarked that "*Often the facilitator from the government tries to convince the attendees with their [own] views because they thought themselves more aware of the situation than others*" (EC-24). The second reason is mistrust of government

Representative of the Private Sector bodies, NG = A member of NGO boards, LC = A member of the key persons of the Local Communities, T= Representative of the ecotourists, FIO = A member of the Funder and International Organisations; and the number refers to the serial number of the interviewee in each group.

[62] PA was an international consulting group, a technical assistant of the USAID.

because local communities and private sector representatives had previously participated in several projects organised by the government without seeing any actual benefits. One interviewee from the private sector claimed that *"I do not trust any project organised by the government. I believe that they only invited us to participate in the discussion to complete their procedures according to the project Terms Of Reference (TOR)"* (PrS-1).

On the other hand, the presence of long experience and unbiased planners within the convening team enabled the identification of some of the stakeholder groups and encouraged them to participate in the planning process. These experts also were familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of the tourism industry in the regions in which the initiatives were located (PS-12). One interviewee argued that *"Some stakeholders in the FEDP were motivated to participate in the planning meetings by the presence of the planner [within convening team] who was unbiased [and] very well aware of the main stakeholder groups and critical dimension of ecotourism development for the Fayoum"* (PS-16). Furthermore, participation of experienced planners in the convening team could be very effective, particularly in the Egyptian situation, which is characterised by fragmented governmental agencies, poor communication and mistrust of the government. One of the interviewees remarked that *"The planners will be the most appropriate convener and acceptable by all stakeholders [governmental and non-governmental] because they are neutral and do not have their own interest to pursue in the outcomes of the process"* (EC-28). Further to this, the planners not only provide technical assistance, but are also open to innovative organising ideas for negotiation between different interests. As one interviewee commented: *"The planner in [the] convening team could innovate new ways and techniques to minimise the conflict [of] interests between the stakeholders*" (PS-20). The planner could also act as a mobiliser, initiator, catalyser and then facilitator of the meetings, to ensure momentum in the collaborative process (Monjardin 2004).

The research will now turn to the second question, which is related to the convener's characteristics. The conveners require certain appreciative skills to perform their roles during the collaborative process. These skills not only enable the conveners to create the appropriate context for the negotiation but also establish a climate of trust between stakeholders and the conveners (EC-3). This section focuses on the most important skills that the convener should display through the collaborative process:

i) The power and legitimacy to induce the stakeholders to participate in the negotiation meetings. As mentioned above, the conveners of those three initiatives had legitimacy derived mainly from long experience and a reputation as an unbiased expert with regard to similar issues and knowledge of the area. For instance, the conveners of the FEDP initiative included the team leader of the EDG consultancy group that was part of the main planning team who had prepared a previous plan for ecotourism development in the Fayoum Governorate, "*Ecotourism for sustainable development in the Fayoum Governorate*", which was prepared by TDA and NSCE in 2000. All stakeholders in the FEDP, such as the local community, hotel owners and tour operators, etc., believed that the EDG had the relevant knowledge and would be fair in organising the negotiations between them (PS-16 and PrS-1);

ii) The ability to listen to all of the views of the stakeholders and efficiently manage the time during the meetings. In FEDP and RSSTI, the conveners were good at listening to all the views and suggestions. But unfortunately many of the stakeholders took a long time to explain their points of view, which often led to stakeholders, with a strong voice and power, taking up most of the discussion time (PrS-2and LC-1). The conveners in both initiatives were not sensitive to the time, with the meetings often finishing before some stakeholders were able to express their views (CISS & EDG 2012; TDA et al. 2003). In the ESDNVG initiative, the convening team sought to solve this problem by dividing the participants into sub-groups to brainstorm, and then they explored the outcomes before the discussion. The convener

determined a limited time for each speaker to ensure all the stakeholders explored succinct, concentrated suggestions (CISS & EDG 2010).

iii) The ability to communicate with stakeholders in and out of the meetings was seen as one of the most important characteristics of the convener (Gray 1989; WEF 2000). In these three ecotourism initiatives, the convening team's communication was largely limited to the formal meetings, at least according to the formal schedule of the initiatives. This led to the fragmented situation between non-governmental and governmental stakeholders and between governmental authorities themselves being maintained (EC-29). The main reason why the conveners did not communicate well was that the majority of the convening team came from outside the project region. They were living in Cairo and were travelling to meet the stakeholders in formal, limited meetings (PS-16). In this regard, another interviewee argued that *"The representatives of the regional tourism authorities in the convening team, such as FTA and NVTA, were not qualified enough to communicate with stakeholders outside of the official meetings"* (PS-20). Moreover, they did not have enough time to communicate with other stakeholders because they had other responsibilities in their parent authorities (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012). In the RSSTI initiative, communication between the conveners was more limited compared with the other initiatives because the representatives of the governmental authorities in the convening team were from the central offices of the TDA and EEAA (TDA et al. 2003). So the convening team could have included qualified representatives of local stakeholders to ensure continuous communication. In this regard, one of the interviewees remarked that *"The conveners were not living here with us. We could not see them except during meetings. We needed to contact them to discuss, in depth, the process of ecotourism development in our region. It would be better if they identified one local person to contact us during the planning process"* (NG-1);

iv) Be neutral. The participants must trust that the convener is not predisposed to one side or another. Moreover, they have to guide rather than dominate, to enable the stakeholders to discuss issues with each other (EC-3 and EC-17). The conveners

were impartial due to the presence of the planners within the convening team. In this respect, one of the interviewees commented that *"During the meetings and workshops of the FEDP, the convener was unbiased to any side. This neutrality helped the stakeholders to express their views freely"* (LC-1). Similarly, another interviewee commented that *"The great feature of the ESDNVG conveners was their ability to direct the discussion and enable stakeholders to talk together rather than with them"* (NG-3).

7.1.2 Identifying and analysing the stakeholders

The second step in building a stakeholder network is identifying and analysing the stakeholders. As the research discussed in Chapter Three, there is a wide range of internal and external stakeholders with varying interests and goals in ecotourism development. The main challenge of collaborative planning is how to build a manageable network from a wide spectrum of stakeholders. This step aims to identify who has a stake, and who can affect, or be affected by the development as well as categorising these stakeholder groups to prioritise their involvement by defining appropriate roles and their levels of participation (Table 7-1).

Table (7-1) The stakeholder network building of Egyptian initiatives compared with the conceptual framework

Critical factors for building a stakeholder network		Performance of Egyptian initiatives			Comments
		FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG	
Clear identification of the convener	Was it a multi-actors convener?	●	●	●	The convening team included three representatives of formal office, the funder and planner
	Has the legitimacy and power of the convener come from formal office?	◉	◉	◉	The formal office within the convening team discouraged the stakeholders from participating
	Has the legitimacy and power of the convener come from long experience & reputation of trust?	●	●	◉	The planner of the convening team has long experience and reputation of trust in FEDP and RSSTI compared with ESDNVG
Important skills that the convener should display in the process	Was the convener a good listener and able to efficiently manage time in the meeting?	◉	◉	●	The convener was a good listener but not sensitive to the time in FEDP and RSSTI
	Had the convener the ability to communicate in & out of the meetings?	◉	◉	◉	The conveners had the ability to communicate only within formal meetings because they were living outside the initiative regions
	Was the convener neutral?	●	●	●	
Did the stakeholder list include all relevant groups?		◉	◉	◉	Some relevant stakeholder groups such as GOPP, MOAG & SPA as well as politicians were excluded from all the initiatives
Was there a clear technique for identifying the representative of each group of the internal stakeholder groups?	The representatives of local communities	●	●	●	In RSSTI and FEDP, they had been based on the survey and interview. In ESDNV, they had been based on the snowball technique by NVTA
	The representatives of the public sector	○	○	○	They had been nominated by the agency bosses without any criteria
	The representatives of the private sector	○	◉	◉	Not all of the private sector had been involved but only a few ecolodge owners were involved in FEDP
	The representatives of NGOs experienced in ecotourism development	○	○	○	No NGOs with any experience were nominated although several experienced NGOs had conducted activities in the initiatives' locations
	The representatives of academic stakeholders	○	○	◉	No academic had been involved in FEDP & ESDNVG although there are Faculty of Tourism and Hotels in initiative regions. But ESDNVG did involve teachers and students
	The representatives of ecotourists as stakeholders	○	○	◉	A few random samples of ecotourists were included in ESDNVG
Clear techniques and criteria of the stakeholder analysis		○	○	○	Stakeholders had not been analysed. The convener considered them all to be at the same level of influence and interest
External stakeholder		○	○	○	No global or national NGOs except ETF in FEDP
Is there a good dialogue between SRs & their parent bodies?	public sector	◉	●	○	The dialogues were not good in the normal situation but were good in new responsibilities or proposed uses
	private sector	●	●	●	There were good dialogues between SRs and their parent groups
	local communities and NGOs	○	○	○	There was no dialogue

● Fully achieved ◉ Partially achieved ○ Not achieved

Source: The author based the idea of Jha-Thakur, Fischer and Rajvanshi (2009)

7.1.2.1 Identifying the internal stakeholders

Although some stakeholders can be readily identified as natural partners for an ecotourism development (such as the TDA and EEAA), other stakeholders with power, interest and influence on the ecotourism issues should also be identified. The identification of stakeholders in the Egyptian initiatives began by identifying the list of relevant stakeholder groups and then requesting a nominated representative from each group (EC-29).

The list of stakeholder groups for each of the Egyptian initiatives differed slightly (see Table 7-2). In this regard, one of the interviewees highlighted that *"In FEDP initiative, for instance, the list of stakeholders included city Municipal Administrations and graduate students from the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels. Such groups were missed from the other lists"* (PS-18). In the same way, another interviewee claimed that *"Only ESDVNG defined the local police and security agency as relevant stakeholders. The local police will be one of the most valuable stakeholders in facilitating ecotourism development in all initiatives"* (PS-10).

Furthermore, some significant authorities were excluded from all of the initiatives, such as those responsible for irrigation and agriculture who had plans for agricultural expansion in the same geographical location as the proposed ecotourism initiatives. GOPP was also excluded, although it had prepared several spatial regional strategies for the Governorates (RS, NVG and Fayoum) in which these initiatives were located (GOPP & UNDP 2010). In this respect, one of the interviewees reflected the views of several others, emphasising that *"The stakeholder lists for all three initiatives excluded important and relevant agencies such as GOPP, who had prepared several recent spatial plans and therefore had an up-to-date database for the key infrastructure in each location"* (PS-14). Similarly, the local planning offices and EMU in Governorate administrations were not included even though these bodies are, in theory, charged with implementing plans (PS-22 and EC-29). In this regard, another interviewee commented that *"One of the major challenges for the planning implementation generally and ecotourism in particular is the exclusion of the local*

planning office and EMU from the planning process" (PS-9). The list of stakeholder groups for any ecotourism planning should include all relevant stakeholders, particularly from local government, to enhance the likelihood of any plan implementation (EC-26).

Table (7-2) The lists of stakeholder groups in Egyptian ecotourism initiatives

	FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG
Public Sector	Administration of Nature Conservation Sector (EEAA), Regional Office of TDA, MOA, FTA, ***city Municipal Administrations*** and Fayoum Governorate	***Central office*** of TDA and EEAA, MOA and Red Sea Governorate	Regional office of EEAA, NVTA, New Valley Governorate, MOA and ***local police and security agency***
Local community	Representatives of the main local communities only	Key persons of all tribes and communities	180 artisans and key persons of local communities
Private sector	A few ecolodge owners	The managers of existing tourism facilities in the RSSTI boundary (such as hotels, diving centres, diving lodges, etc.). Plus ***delegates of national and international tourism industry bodies***	150 employees in the tourism sector such as hoteliers, local tours and investors
NOGs	Tunis and Betah NGOs	Representative of a number of NGOs such as HEPCA	Representative of 12 NGOs such as Al-Lewa Sobeih and Al-Hayah
Education institutions	***Newly graduated students from the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels***		***Teachers and students from preparatory and secondary schools***
Ecotourist			***Ecotourists***

Source: The author - the differences between these lists are illustrated by ***bold and italic*** text

In relation to the identification techniques used to create each list, there were slight differences of approach. In the FEDP, the conveners and planning team identified the list of stakeholders based on: i) reviewing the documents of previous ecotourism and tourism plans that had been prepared in a similar location to FEDP. These documents helped to identify potential stakeholders and their interests in ecotourism development (CISS & EDG 2008); and ii) the long experience and reputation of the convener and planning team in the Fayoum. They had shared in the

preparation of several development plans by being part of the EDG consultancy group. They therefore modified and developed the list which had been produced in the previous stages to include significant actors with an interest in the tourism development in the FEDP location, such as the city Municipal Administrations of Fayoum and Sinnuris (PS-20).

The RSSTI by contrast identified the list of stakeholder groups through a brain storming meeting of the convening team with RS Governorate employees. In this regard, one of the interviewees suggested that *"[Because] the RSG has been subjected to more than 75 initiatives and its employees were familiar with a wide spectrum of the stakeholders groups, a comprehensive list of the stakeholders in the RSSTI was identified during an official meeting with RSG employees"* (EC-22). Due to the limited information and previous tourism development plan for NVG, the ESDNVG initiative established initial meetings and arranged interviews with the main readily identified partners of ecotourism development such as NVTA, regional office of the EEAA and Governorate to scope and define other possible and relevant actors (PS-21).

Once the organisations were identified it then became necessary to seek individuals who could represent the interests of each stakeholder group.

In all the case studies, when dealing with the public sector, the convening team, through the formal office representative, such as the FTA in the FEDP, sent an official invitation to the governmental authorities that had been identified as critical stakeholders, asking them to nominate their delegate to engage in the planning process. The convener did not determine any criteria for these envoys for two reasons. First, the convener was not aware of the detailed administrative structure of each governmental agency or the skills and knowledge of employees at each level (PS-20). In this regard, the planning team leader of the FEDP initiative remarked that *"We cannot put any criteria for nominating governmental agency representatives because we did not have any idea about the hieratical positions nor employee skills in each one. The chairmen of these agencies would not accept the FEDP or any external person nominating a specific employee within their organisation for any task"* (EC-1).

Secondly, the governmental agencies in Egypt are all managed by an appointed chairman. Any external criteria for nominating the representative from within their institution would be considered as an external imposition in the internal affairs of their organisation and then they would refuse to participate in the project (EC-24). So these authorities designated their representatives according to patronage of the chief and the availability of his employees.

The nominated representatives were either a top executive from the regional offices, such as MOA, or from the middle level of decision-making, such as Fayoum and the NV Governorates and the EEAA (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012). However, these representatives often had little or no knowledge about ecotourism development and their participation throughout was not effective (PS-10). Indeed, one of the interviewees remarked that *"Unfortunately the majority of the delegates from the governmental agencies that participated in FEDP knew neither the difference between ecotourism and other tourism forms, nor understood ecotourism development principles"* (PS-16). Furthermore, although the top executives theoretically had the authority to take decisions during the planning process meetings, they were often absent from some meetings because they were busy with other tasks within their agency. In this regard, the Chairman of the FTA remarked that *"The repeated absence of the public sector delegates influenced the performance of the meetings and the decisions"* (PS-20). With regard to public sector staff from the middle level of decision-making, they were available to attend all the meetings, but they did not have authority or delegation from their agency to take decisions in the planning process. One interviewee commented that *"The delegates from the Governorates and EEAA were available to attend all the meetings, as observers only. They had no decision-making authority [on] behalf [of] their institutions. It would have been more effective if they had been authorised to decide"* (PS-11).

With regard to the local community representatives, in the FEDP initiative, they were identified by the planning team through living with the local people and sharing their food, popular activities and occasions. The planning team also conducted

informal interviews and face-to-face discussions with the indigenous people to identify the key persons in the communities. Similarly, intensive field investigations were carried out with the craft producers (pottery, basketry and carpets, and fishing-net manufacturing and rowboat construction) in Shakshok, Tunis, Kahek, El-Nazla villages, etc. Also, many vendors in various locations on the road to Lake Qarun, Fayoum city and in Ein-Elsellin were visited. Individual and group interviews were carried out during these visits (CISS & EDG 2008; Khalifa & El-Khateeb 2011). In this regard, one of interviewees remarked that *"The planning team stayed a long time with the local people of Fayoum. They shared with us many private and public occasions, as well as visiting the main handicraft producers to discuss their problems, needs and possibilities of participating in the process"* (LC-1). But not all communities of the Governorate were included in these interviews or field investigations. In particular, communities that were adjacent to the main centre of existing ecotourism provision were omitted. One of the interviewees claimed that *"The communities that were adjacent [to] the protected area [such as Shalaan and Salam villages, which are close to Wadi El-Ryan protected area] did not have any representative in the process. These communities should have been involved in the planning process at least to define their needs in terms of mitigating any abuse of these resources"* (PS-5).

Similarly with the RSSTI, the convener hired a team of senior social scientists and experienced field researchers to survey and interview all the local communities to collect information (Snyder 2004). As one of the interviewees noted: *"The team of social scientists reviewed the traditional activities and interviewed inhabitants, whether original tribes people or immigrants from other places, in order to recognise their potentials and challenges for ecotourism development"* (LC-3). These interviews were helpful to identify who were the knowledgeable key persons who would be a reference for the team in providing the required information. Likewise, one interviewee claimed that *"The nominated persons were excluded from the planning*

activities except [for] providing the missing information and taking part in a raising awareness campaign at the end of the planning process" (PS-6).

In the ESDNVG initiative, the local community delegates were nominated using a snowballing technique. The most famous and main artisans from the NVG oases were initially asked to participate in the process. There, as reported, *"NVTA invited directly the key persons from the three main oases, Kharga, Dakhla and Farafra, to an initial meeting and asked them to nominate other interested and active people to participate in the planning activities*" (EC-26).

Although private sector businesses are critical to an effective ecotourism planning and implementing process, because of their long understanding of the tourism market and their ability to promote potential business opportunities which will attract their investment, it is interesting to note how in practice their involvement in the planning process was very limited. In the FEDP initiative, only a few ecolodge owners were invited as representatives of the private sector by the FTA. The FTA excluded other tourism industry bodies such as tour operators, tourism agencies, investors and owners of small businesses, etc., who could have provided significant leverage in the planning process if they had participated (PS-16). Likewise, one interviewee, who reflected the views of others on this issue, commented that *"One of the major constraints for ecotourism development in Fayoum was excluding a wide range of the private sector interests from involvement in the planning process. Indeed, the FEDP planning team invited only a small number of ecolodge owners based on personal relations. In my opinion, tour operators and tourism agencies should have participated to enhance the ecotourism development planning"* (PrS-2).

In a different way, the convener of the RSSTI initiative invited the main representatives of the private sector from the managers of existing tourism facilities (hotels, diving centres, diving lodges, etc.) to participate in the planning process based on the field surveys and interviews of all the managers of tourism facilities in the RSSTI boundaries. This had been carried out by a professional survey team (TDA et al. 2003). Moreover, RSSTI also invited national and international tourism industry

bodies to separate events aimed at widening the discussion about ecotourism development in Egypt generally, not focusing on the Southern Red Sea Region (SRSR) (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004). In this regard, one of the interviewees commented that *"Because ecotourism was a new form of tourism in Egypt, RSSTI invited a wide group of national and international bodies to discuss ecotourism development in the whole state and how the RSG could be a starting point for this form of activities"* (EC-2). Similarly, two of the RSSTI team members remarked that *"identification of private sector representatives in RSSTI was based on two techniques. The first was nominating the delegates from the existing tourism services mangers in SRSR, following professional surveys and interviews. The second was the identification of delegates from a wide variety of national and international tourism industry bodies invited to participate in specific events during the project, such as the STE Conference in 2003. These delegates received a direct invitation from TDA and MOT"* (EC-22 and EC-23).

In the ESDNVG initiative, the convener nominated representatives from the private sector from the main three oases, Dakhla, Kharga and Farafra, following a brain storming session with the working group, based on personal knowledge of the attendees without any obvious criteria. The selected representatives included hoteliers, small entrepreneurs, tour operators and local guides (CISS & EDG 2012).

However, due to lack of trust between the private sector and the government, the participation of the former in the planning process was a critical weakness. The government believed that the private sector was concerned only with their profits. From the other perspective, as highlighted by one interviewee, *"The private sector had reservations about the lack of a strategic vision of decision-making adopted by the government. All the key decisions were always changing according to the political situation"* (PrS-4). Similarly, another interviewee commented that *"The private sector needs guarantees from the government that the agreed agreements or plans would be respected and [were] not personally-based decisions"* (NG-3). A much fuller and more worthwhile contribution from the private sector could have been facilitated by

the Egyptian Tourism Federation (ETF) and Chamber of Commerce (CoC) because they have a solid database and excellent relations with key personnel from tourism industry bodies who could have been invaluable for an efficient planning process. Hence, one interviewee claimed that *"The ETF and CoC could have played a more pivotal role as motivator and guarantor for private sector participation in the planning process"* (EC-26).

By reviewing all the FEDP documents, it was clear that the local educational institutions were only symbolically involved in the planning process. Although there is a Faculty of Tourism and Hotels in the Fayoum, which includes over 60 academic staff in three departments, the convener did not invite any of them to be involved in the planning process, nor to attend any meetings (CISS 2013b). However, the convener did involve a small group of newly graduated students from this Faculty because these students would be future tour operators and tourism guides, etc., so it was thought to be invaluable for them to participate in the planning process. They helped the convener to organise the meetings. One of the interviewees claimed that *"I could not imagine that the FEDP excluded academic staff from the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels from the planning process, whilst it involved newly graduated students of the faculty"* (EC-27). Another interviewee claimed that *"These identified students were randomly chosen without any criteria like the graduation projects"* (PS-18). It may have been more effective if the academic staff had participated, as well as the graduated students, because they have research skills and long practical experiences in ecotourism demand indicators and development (NG-1).

Similarly, the RSSTI did not include any delegates from educational institutions, despite the funder, USAID, inviting the Ministry of Education (MOE) to be a partner in assisting in awareness raising of ecotourism amongst the stakeholder groups. The MOE did not nominate any delegate for this purpose (TDA et al. 2003). In this regard, one interviewee claimed that the *"MOE did not have any qualified staff close to the project area who could contribute. The closest branch was located in Hurghada city, about 250 miles away"* (EC-24).

The ESDVNG initiative did involve representatives of teachers and students from ten preparatory and secondary schools from the oases of Kharga, Dakhla and Farafra. Their role was to raise awareness with other teachers and students about the potential of ecotourism development to help protect the natural and cultural assets in the oases of NVG (CISS & EDG 2010). *"ESDVNG involved a delegation of teachers and students to instruct the new generation about the application of environmental and ecotourism programmes to respect the natural and cultural assets through collaboration with others"* (EC-27). Another interviewee claimed that *"The education administration of NVG randomly nominated 75 teachers and 75 students from each oasis to attend the awareness-raising campaign. This was considered one of the most important events for involving stakeholders during the planning process"* (PS-21).

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) are valuable players in ecotourism planning both in developed and developing countries. However, the involvement of NGOs through Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives was very limited and not effective. This was because of two reasons. Firstly, the majority of NGOs in Egypt are primarily interested in providing social services for needy people. There are few qualified and experienced NGOs working in the field of ecotourism or environmental planning (EC-29). Secondly, there is a lack of tradition in Egypt of promoting the development of NGOs working in the fields of natural, cultural and tourism contexts which could complement and challenge the role of the state (EC-23).

Nevertheless, handicrafts associations were involved as NGO representatives. For example, the Betah group (producing pottery in Fayoum) and Al-Lewa Sobeih NGO (the basket and pottery industry in Farafra oasis) were included (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012). Although one of the interviewees felt that whilst *"Handicraft associations do not have a basic knowledge about ecotourism development, it would be better if they had played a supplementary role to experienced NGOs in ecotourism, such as Nature Conservation Egypt (NCE)"* (NG-2), another interviewee claimed that *"Although there are several experienced NGOs in the ecotourism and environmental programme and they have already [contributed to] activities in Fayoum and RS. They*

were excluded from the planning process" (NG-1). Further to this, another interviewee reflected the views of several others, emphasising that *"The main reasons behind the exclusion of ecotourism NGOs from the planning process of the initiatives was these NGOs often collided with unsustainable decisions of the government. For instance, NCE raised an issue, in the courts, against the TDA plan in 2004"* (EC-1). Hence the key participants were suspicious of the role NGOs could and would play and hence excluded them from the outset.

Once the stakeholders were identified it became necessary to prioritise their involvement during the planning process. The research now turns to discuss how the stakeholders have been analysed to define appropriate roles and their level of participation during Egyptian ecotourism initiatives.

7.1.2.2 Analysing the internal stakeholders

Due to the wide range of stakeholders potentially interested in regional ecotourism development, analysis of all the key stakeholders is a crucial step in building the network. It is necessary to categorise and define their roles during the planning process in order to identify any gaps, so that a balance between under- or over-represented stakeholders can be achieved (Taschner & Fiedler 2009).

The analysis of stakeholders in the Egyptian ecotourism initiatives studied did not utilise any of the techniques noted in Chapter Three. But the conveners and their working groups classified the stakeholders based on either the position of named individuals (top executive, first line of decision-makers and regional/local executive employees) or sector (public, private, local community and NGOs) (CISS & EDG 2012). However, *"The Egyptian initiatives did not use the level of the stakeholder interest or influence on ecotourism development to categorise, and then prioritise their involvement during the planning process, but instead used their level of seniority"* (EC-20). Each potential stakeholder was considered as having the same degree of importance, although they had a variety of different interests, influences and power where it came to planning issues (EC-29). The stakeholders in those initiatives were involved in the majority of activities as separate groups having the same

backgrounds, culture or positions. This classification approach had some advantages – notably it gave the participants from the lower positions (local community and craftspeople (particularly illiterate people)) enough space and time to explain their opinions without the decision-makers dominating the discussion and directly (or indirectly) shaping the views of the attendees (EC-24). In this respect, one of the local officials said that *"I and my colleagues could not express our views freely in front of our bosses. The best way used was that the planners met each level of employees separately"* (PS-13). Furthermore, discussions and negotiations held in homogenous small groups meant that consensus could more easily be achieved and outcomes agreed (EC-1).

However, there were some problems with this approach. Firstly, the disconnection between different stakeholder groups led to conflicts remaining between them (as will discuss in both sections 7.1.4 and 7.4.1). In this respect, one of the interviewees commented that *"These meetings did not mitigate the conflicts between the different stakeholder groups but they could be considered as a first step for negotiations to begin"* (PS-10). And secondly any success in the negotiations between the different groups was based mainly on the convener bringing different stakeholder views together. Hence, as noted by one interviewee, *"In all three initiatives, the convening team played a pivotal role to assemble all group views to reach a shared agreement"* (PS-4). This task required a qualified convening team not an individual to mediate the discussion – as they had been separated into small homogenous groups (EC-29). Further to this, one interviewee, who reflects the views of several others, commented that *"The main reason behind using this method was the wide range of education, background culture and positions between and among different stakeholder groups – particularly, the craftspeople could not understand the language of top executive employees"* (EC-20). Furthermore, another interviewee suggested that *"Another reason for using this approach of small groups was that there was conflict between some governmental agencies, such MOA and TDA. They refused to meet together"* (PS-16).

In the FEDP initiative, the convener recognised that dealing with all stakeholders as one group would not be effective for negotiations, particularly following the experience of the first seminar organised by the funder, CISS. All the stakeholders were gathered together, but there was no tangible outcome because the leaders of the national governmental agencies consumed all the seminar time and did not allow others time to talk (EC-1). Furthermore, *"The local people and craftspeople could not follow the discussion because the speakers used technical terms and English words without considering the level and background of the local audience"* (PS-18). As a result of this experience, the convening team divided the stakeholders into three groups: a) governmental agency leaders, including national ministry and higher government employees; b) regional office employees of the government and representatives of the private sector; and c) representatives of local communities, craftspeople and NGOs (PS-20). In this regard, the planning team leader of the FEDP argued that *"In my view, the outcomes of the second and third groups were more productive after they had separated the groups. All stakeholders felt free to explore their views without any influence or pressure from the top executive employees and decision-makers"*, although *"These separate groups required considerable effort to ensure they connected with each other and to mediate between them in order that agreeable outcomes could be reached"* (EC-20).

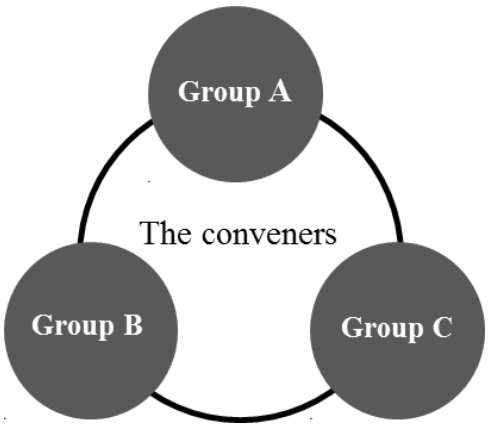


Figure (7-1) The convener's role as connector between separate stakeholder groups in FEDP and ESDNVG initiatives
Source: The author

Similarly, in the ESDNVG initiative, the convener dealt with stakeholders through the majority of the initiative activities as three separate groups drawn from each oasis, Dakhla, Kharga and Farafra. The convener combined the local artisans and NGOs in the first group, and the teachers and students from preparatory and secondary schools in the second group. The third group contained the delegates from the private sector and public sector (regional governmental agencies only) (CISS & EDG 2010). This was reinforced by one interviewee who claimed: *"Representatives of the central offices of TDA and EEAA were not involved in any of the third group meetings. But they were involved in the event of New Valley cultural week to meet the Italian representatives [the funder]. This event was held in the Italian Cultural Institute in Cairo"* (PS-21).

The RSSTI initiative was similar to the other two. It considered all the stakeholders as having the same degree of interest and influence on the development, although detailed information about them was available from professionally conducted surveys and interviews with the members of the local communities and managers of the existing tourism facilities (EC-24). However, the RSSTI dealt with the stakeholders during the planning activities as separate small groups based on sectors.

Consequently, the classification approach used in those three initiatives could be helpful as a first stage of the process to develop consensus between the stakeholders. Following this stage, these separate groups really needed to be brought together in order that true collaboration and real mitigation of the conflicts of interests could be achieved as the foundation for building joint commitment for the plan's implementation (EC-29). In this regard, one of the interviewees commented that *"Conflicts between stakeholder interests in ecotourism development could not be mitigated without a negotiation between the different groups"* (PS-5). However *"The conveners could not combine all stakeholder groups together because there was need to have a manageable number for discussion [in the smaller groups]. So the*

stakeholders should be classified based on their power and interest to represent different stakeholder interests in each sub-group" (EC-3).

7.1.2.3 The external stakeholder network

These networks are just as important for a successful planning process as internal ones. Their support for ecotourism development can assume various forms depending on the type of organisation involved such as co-financing, major experience, political influence, training and media, etc. These external stakeholders might be global or national bodies (GIZ 2011)

There are several global actors who can be external complementary stakeholders for Egyptian ecotourism initiatives. These organisations have relevance and value based upon their previous activities and long experience in ecotourism and environmental development. In developing countries in general, and in Egypt in particular, these agencies include UNDP, UNEP, IUCN, The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) and United Nations Tourism World Organisation (UNTWO) (EC-24). In this regard, another interviewee remarked that *"There are a huge number of international governmental and non-governmental organisations who are interested in assisting development in Egypt whether from a technical or financial perspective. However, none were invited to participate in any of the initiatives" (*NG-2). For example *"The Government of Egypt received significant technical assistance from UNWTO for the country's new 'National Sustainable Strategic Plan' in 2007 at the same time as the FEDP initiative. But the conveners did not seek to utilise this potential during the process"* (PS-14;UNWTO 2008). Another example of an opportunity lost was in the Fayoum Governorate, where UNESCO provided funding to prepare an ecotourism development strategy for Wadi Al-Hitan protected area in conjunction with FEDP. However, UNESCO was not involved as relevant stakeholders of the FEDP (Helal & Ameer 2006). Hence, whilst *"The conveners of the three initiatives had long experience [as ex-consultants or ex-employees] with the global organisations interested in ecotourism and sustainable development, they did*

not use their experience to widen the external support for these initiatives by seeking financial resources for plan implementation" (EC-5).

In relation to the national external stakeholders, due to the highly centralised system in Egypt, the main ministries and authorities at national level (as MOT, TDA and EEAA) were considered the key players in the internal stakeholder network because they have more power and influence on ecotourism development than the regional and local government (EC-21). Therefore this research considered the non-governmental organisations that are located outside the initiatives' boundaries as national external stakeholders. There were many non-governmental organisations, especially at the national level, that could have operated as external actors for the Egyptian ecotourism initiatives, such as Egyptian Hotels Association (EHA), Egyptian Tourism Federation (ETF) and Chamber of Commerce (CoC) (EC-24). As one of the interviewees remarked, *"These organisations could have supported these initiatives in many aspects such as providing financial resources, accurate and updated information, experience in feasibility and marketing studies, and assistance in mitigating any implementation difficulties "* (EC-20). Similarly, another interviewee emphasised that *"The ETF, EHA and CoC have significant interest in ecotourism destinations. They also want to enhance the development in these regions to widen the business base for their members. So they could have supported ecotourism development initiatives, if they had been given the chance"* (EC-28).

The FEDP was the only initiative that involved a national NGO (the ETF) during the planning process. ETF nominated a representative to contribute to the planning process following an invitation from the convener. However, the convener failed to define those aspects of the planning process that the ETF could best support (PS-20). Instead, *"The convener dealt with ETF as a normal stakeholder. It did not utilise the potentials of the ETF in the media or among its broader networks to expose and market Fayoum resources as an ecotourism destination"* (PS-11).

Now that the stakeholder involvement priorities have been analysed, it becomes necessary to discuss what dialogue there is between stakeholder representatives and their parent bodies.

7.1.3 Dialogue between stakeholder representatives and their respective parent bodies

The interaction between stakeholder representatives (SRs) and their parent bodies during the planning process is crucial in enhancing support and commitment to any final agreement. The dialogue within each of the Egyptian initiatives varied from one stakeholder group to another.

In the FEDP initiative, dialogues between the stakeholder representatives and their respective governmental authorities were not good. The normal communication technique was written summary reports from the SRs to their managers after each meeting had been completed. But there was a lack of feedback and no guidance given to the SRs in terms of what, if anything, they should say as part of future negotiations (PS-10). This was reinforced by one representative who claimed that *"There was no dialogue between me and my agency except for a brief report containing the most important outputs from the meetings, without any discussion. In other words, it was simply a one-way reporting process with no guidance or steer for what further outcomes should be"* (PS-11). However, *"In the final phase of the FEDP process, the dialogue between the TDA and their SRs was intensive. This was as a result of proposing two bird-watching areas in TDA lands, located on the northern coast of Lake Qarun"* (EC-1). The dialogues in this phase were intense, resulting in several reports and brain storming sessions between the SRs and the TDA staff to address this issue and how to resolve it (PS-20). Similarly, another interviewee highlighted that *"The main aim of the intensive dialogue was to change these uses because the TDA already had another plan in the same areas"* (PS-5).

However, amongst the private sector agency representatives dialogue was more pro-active. Feedback and guidance was given after each meeting so that the representative could negotiate throughout the process, best representing the interests

of that particular organisation. As one representative of the ecolodge owners highlighted: *"I was meeting with other owners for discussions about any decisions to be taken during the FEDP process in order to evaluate the effects on our business future"* (PrS-1).

For those individuals invited to represent the interests of local people, handicraft groups or NGOs, they only offered their own personal opinions without engaging in dialogue with other members of the group. Hence, as one of the interviewees noted, *"Although Betah and Tunis NGOs have regular meetings with their members, there is no discussions with their representatives about the FEDP, whilst their relations with the project have finished once the planning meeting ended, because of their limited experience in the same development projects"* (EC-25).

With the RSSTI initiative, the dialogues involved regular reports and meetings before and after each activity. It was claimed that the more proactive and interactive approach was due to the fact that the representatives were from central government offices (TDA and EEAA) that have previous experience of similar projects (EC-20). Indeed, the *"TDA created a new administration unit, namely the ecotourism department, to follow-up on RSSTI activities. This unit prepared monthly and quarterly reports for the central management committee of the project based on regular dialogue with its representatives in the process"* (PS-4). Moreover, there was combined dialogue between the representatives of the EEAA and TDA and their parent agencies trying to address significant conflicts about the appropriate ecolodge density (the number of ecolodge rooms per feddan (0.42 hectare)) in Wadi Gimal National Park. Unfortunately, the EEAA insisted that its views were accepted (EC-23). Nevertheless, *"Whilst the EEAA insisted on its views about the density of ecolodges being accepted, these combined dialogues between the EEAA and TDA with their representatives did help to address other issues - such as coordination in examining EIA studies for tourism projects"* (EC-22).

With the private sector agencies, dialogues were more effective here than elsewhere because big national and international tourism agencies already existed

within the Red Sea area and these were well organised. Their representatives were well briefed, guided as to what outcomes would be the best result for the parent groups and formal feedback followed each meeting (EC-20).

With the EDNVG, there was limited consultation of the stakeholder representatives and the constituencies that they were supposed to represent. For example, the majority of the governmental representatives were not accountable because they were the chairmen of the regional or local offices (such as MOA and EEAA) (PS-17). Hence, as the EEAA representative acknowledged, *"EEAA representatives from the regional office simply faxed a summary of the final recommendations and outcomes of ESDNVG to the central office in Cairo without any discussion between them during the planning process"* (PS-12). In the same way, another interviewee highlighted that *"representatives from the local police and security agencies simply gave their boss a copy of the meeting's minutes to provide evidence of their participation in the planning process for ecotourism development"* (PS-21). Furthermore, there was a lack of dialogue between representatives and the groups they represented (private sector, local community, and NGOs) throughout the process.

7.1.4 Factors influencing the stakeholder networks

The stakeholder networks of Egyptian ecotourism initiatives were not very effective during the planning process. This was due to several factors which influenced the formation of these networks and the relationships between and within the stakeholder groups. These factors and the impacts that they have on the efficiency of the network will now be discussed

1) There was lack of cooperation between stakeholder groups in general and governmental agencies in particular: The EEAA, TDA and Fayoum Governorate had cooperated in preparing previous ecotourism plans in 2002, 2004 and 2008, but they still had conflicts and there were no actual outcomes from these plans. As one interviewee claimed: *"Although the TDA and EEAA cooperated in several ecotourism development plans in the Red Sea and Fayoum Governorates, their conflicts have*

been evident in every initiative. These conflicts will also be evident in the next plans because there is a big gap in their regulations[63] *and in ecotourism definitions. A joint committee containing both parties might be a valuable approach to settle these differences"* (EC-1). Similarly, another interviewee highlighted that *"There is a critical issue between the TDA, EEAA and MOA as a result of the tourism development plan for the northern coast of Qarun Lake. This had been prepared by the TDA in 2004 without informing either the EEAA or MOA, who both had shared in ownership of this project location. This issue was not solved until the end of the FEDP. How could these agencies therefore be expected to collaborate during the FEDP planning process?"* (PS-20). Likewise, one interviewee commented that "The *EEAA refused to sign the final RSSTI plan to try to force the TDA to change the ecolodge density in low intensive zones from 20 to 2 rooms per feddan. The TDA was forced to do so because the donor of RSSTI, USAID, stipulated that the money transfer to pay for the project could only occur with the approval of all the governmental stakeholders of the final plan"* (EC-23). But this is hardly the basis for creating trust and mutual respect for this and future collaborative ventures

The private sector also contested the density of the ecolodges in RSSTI. They did not accept the low density because two rooms per feddan would not be economically feasible. The governmental stakeholders nevertheless adopted this density (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004). In this regard, someone from the private sector, who reflected the view of many others, claimed that *"The governmental agencies did not take our suggestions into account, which were based on local market conditions. They have to negotiate openly about our suggestions in order to motivate us to contribute to the planning and implementation process"* (PrS-3). Similarly, the local communities mistrusted these initiatives, because they believed that these projects were no more than paper exercises and they did not expect to see any benefit

[63] For example, there is a big difference between the EEAA and TDA about defining the tourism area boundaries and the guidelines of the ecotourism activities within the protected area (EEAA 2012; TDA et al. 2008).

or added value. For example, the local people in Fayoum had been involved in five previous ecotourism development plans before the FEDP, without real benefits to their lives (LC-1). Hence there was a certain degree of mistrust and scepticism about what eventually would be achieved.

2) The fragmentation in government agencies being delivered is also a major problem with a lack of horizontal and vertical integration. With regard to the horizontal dimension, there is a lack of coordination between the EEAA, TDA and MOA, which are considered the primary national governmental stakeholders for Egyptian ecotourism development. For instance, one of the interviewees claimed that *"Although there is a wide [amount of] land under authority of both TDA and MOA, there are significant conflicts within their respective plans. For example, the TDA planned to develop the northern coast of Qarun Lake and marketed its plan to investors. At the same time, the MOA discovered this location contained many prehistoric antiques and devised a plan to catalogue and protect them. The MOA complained to the Cabinet to stop the TDA's plan after exerting a lot of money and efforts to develop it"* (PS-16). In a similar view, another interviewee noted that *"Unfortunately, the relevant national governmental agencies involved in ecotourism development have different plans for the same locations. They should be forced to co-operate to produce [an] integrated plan for these locations"* (PS-10).

Moreover, there is wide overlapping in the local and regional levels between responsibilities of the Governorates' administrations and the regional offices of the EEAA and TDA (as discussed in Chapter Four). In this regard, one of the interviewees noted that *"The Environmental Management Unit in the Governorate and regional offices of the EEAA and the TDA have almost the same mandates for monitoring tourism activities"* (*PS*-13). Similarly, another interviewee commented that *"Although the Fayoum Tourism Authority and New Valley Tourism Authority, under supervision of their Governors, have the same mandates of the Egyptian Tourism Authority under the MOT to promote tourism through marketing the tourism product, there is a lack of coordination or communication between them"* (*PS*-20). Despite these overlapping

competences, the initiatives did offer the potential for greater co-operation and coordination between governmental stakeholders. However, this opportunity was lost and, in the FEDP, a lack of communication and coordination between the Governorate administration and the Regional Branch Offices (RBOs) of the TDA and the EEAA regularly influenced the efficiency of the relations between them during the planning process (*PS*-11).

Furthermore, the lack of consistency of information between authorities is one of the main results of horizontal fragmentation. The Cabinet has an Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC) which is mandated to provide the necessary information and research to all governmental authorities (IDSC 2013). However, these authorities are mainly dependent on their own information sources when preparing their plans (Hegazy 2010; SIS 2013a). Hence data sets tend to be incompatible there is no exchange of data between authorities, with each one tending to hide its information from the others (EC-8). This often leads to duplication of efforts, unnecessary expense and data sets for the same information that are often conflicting.

With regard to vertical fragmentation, within the same agency there is often a lack of coordination and communication between the central, regional and local offices. As noted by one interviewee: *"During the ESDNVG planning process, the RBOs of the TDA and the EEAA participated as delegates of their central office. However, the communication and coordination between them was rare"* (PS-21). Furthermore, the central offices usually dominate and intervene without respecting the responsibilities of lower-tier government agencies. Hence, one of the interviewees noted that *"During the RSSTI planning process, the central offices of TDA and EEAA participated as stakeholders without including representatives from the regional and local branches that are charged with following-up activities once the plan has been agreed at the local level"* (PS-6). This lack of dialogue between the various levels of the same agencies was one of the critical weaknesses in the networks (PS-8).

3) In all cases, the exclusion of relevant stakeholders from the planning process was a problem: In relation to the internal stakeholders, although the GOPP is mandated by Law No 119/2008 to develop the national policy and prepare strategic spatial plans at the different levels (national, regional, and local) (Egyptian Government 2008), it was excluded from the three ecotourism planning initiatives. In this regard, two of the interviewees claimed that *"The GOPP prepared the strategic spatial plans for the Fayoum, RSG and NVG development and it has up-to-date data and maps about all the local resources. However, the conveners of the ecotourism initiatives did not involve the GOPP in the planning process nor were its strategic plans acknowledged"* (*PS*-14). Furthermore, the Shores Protection Authority was not involved in the RSSTI planning process, even though it is responsible for reviewing and monitoring all coastal tourism activities. This was noted by one interviewee who said it *"plays a pivotal role in monitoring shore situations and cooperating with both the RSG and EEAA. It also prepares plans for coastal activities according to its up-to-date databases. However, the Shores Protection Authority was not involved in the planning process nor had its plans recognised"* (*PS*-10). Moreover, academic experts in the Faculty of Tourism and Hotels with relevant knowledge and interest in ecotourism development were also excluded from the FEDP and ESDNVG initiatives.

Global external stakeholders in particular were excluded from the process, although several international organisations already had activities and projects in the locality of each initiative. For instance, after declaring Wadi El-Hitan (Whales Valley) a World Heritage Site in 2005 (at the beginning of the FEDP schedule), UNESCO funded Cairo University to prepare an ecotourism development strategy for the area in 2006. However, the FEDP convener did not involve UNESCO or Cairo University as relevant stakeholders, and at the same time did not recognise the Wadi Al-Hitan strategy (Helal & Ameer 2006). Another example of the exclusion of external stakeholders was the Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA) which had funded and contributed to the development of Environmental Action Plans for the Fayoum Governorate in 2006 and 2008. This coincided with the FEDP initiative

(Fayoum & EEAA 2008). However, despite this knowledge and interest, it was not involved as a relevant stakeholder, as one of the interviewees explained: *"It made no sense to exclude DANIDA from the ESDNVG planning process. It had prepared environmental action plans for the NVG [staging in 2007-2012] which included an evaluation of environmental resources and offered solutions to the major problems"* (EC-29).

4) Limiting the participation and the role of the local communities during the planning process can also be considered a weakness: Egyptian ecotourism initiatives have limited local community participation. By law (Law No 119/2009) they only have to be invited in consultation on the final outcomes of the intended plan and perhaps a few other activities such as workshops designed to raise awareness about the potential of ecotourism development (EC-26). Nevertheless, whilst local community groups were more involved than suggested by the law, this was still fairly limited and often they were excluded from critical parts of the process. For instance, in the ENSDVG initiative the craftspeople, as representatives of the local community, were involved in the middle of the process – one year after the project had started – as part of an intensive campaign to raise awareness about ecotourism development in the area (CISS & EDG 2012). *"Although it is important that community involvement takes place at the very early stages of the planning process because there they can understand their role and work with other stakeholder groups, local communities in the ESDNVG initiative were only involved after twelve months"* (NG-3). They were then excluded from the process for another six months, before becoming involved again, in the best practice experience exchange (between FEDP and ESDNVG craftspeople) (CISS 2012a). Hence, as one of the interviewees noted: *"This discrete involvement of local people in ESDNVG did not build efficient relations with other stakeholder groups"* (*EC*-29).

Similarly, in the RSSTI and FEDP initiatives, the participation of the local communities was only at discrete distinct stages within process. They had been involved early in the data collection stage and later with consultation meetings about

the plan. As one interviewee reported: *"In RSSTI, the local communities were involved in the data collection activities and then were excluded for three years from the process before involved again in two separate events. One was an awareness-raising campaign [42 months from the project's beginning] and the second was the formal public hearing consultation [after 46 months]"* (*EC*-24). Another interviewee commented that *"The local communities' commitment to the outcomes of the RSSTI was generally negative as a result of not being involved in producing a plan which met their needs"* (*EC*-1).

This means that participation by the local communities during the planning process was at best reduced to discrete events. The convener could have involved representatives from the local communities in all phases of the planning process to help improve their commitment to the finally agreed plans.

Synthesis

In the previous sections, the stakeholder network building in Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives has been evaluated against the conceptual framework. Table (7-1) illustrated the performance of stakeholder network building in specific Egyptian cases. Based on this evaluation, it is apparent that the convener identification and characteristics were undertaken fairly successfully but the identification and analysis of stakeholders to prioritise their involvement in the process as well as the dialogue between the representatives and their parent bodies have deficiencies. This is because certain critical factors affected the stakeholder networks. These included i) previous experiences of negative cooperation between them, creating a climate of mistrust; ii) fragmentation within and between government agencies; iii) the exclusion of relevant stakeholders from the process; and iv) the limited participation and role of local communities.

7.2 Stakeholder engagement in the planning process

Stakeholder engagement is one of the most significant ingredients in a successful planning process in general, and for ecotourism development in particular. This section evaluates stakeholder engagement by focusing on four main components.

7.2.1Stakeholder roles and level of participation throughout the planning process

Successful planning requires a broad spectrum of stakeholders to mirror the critical components of the issue. Due to differences in the degree of stakeholder influence and interests, different levels of participation during the planning process will probably be necessary. In this regard, one of the interviewees noted *"The success of ecotourism development depends on the real involvement of a wide range of stakeholders. However, Egyptian initiatives were far away from this ideal. So the implementation of plans was often in vain because stakeholders were not committed to a plan that did not meet their interests"* (EC-29). This section will discuss the variety of stakeholder roles and their levels of involvement during the planning process.

Based on the interviewees and review of the technical and management reports from each of the initiatives, it can be suggested that stakeholder participation in all case studies, at best, can be described as tokenism, at least judged against Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation. The stakeholder participation during the planning process was confined to informing, consulting and placation (CISS & EDG 2012; TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004). Although the stakeholders were involved in joint analysis and developing a plan (interactive participation) through the placation, the central government still had the authority to determine the final decisions. However, participation in Egyptian initiatives needed to move towards the higher rungs of the Arnstein's ladder, to more active participation and empowerment of stakeholders in decision-making (EC-21). Each level of participation will be examined (see Table 7-3) below in more detail.

Table (7-3) Stakeholder roles and their level of participation during Egyptian ecotourism initiatives

			Performance of Egyptian initiatives			Comments
			FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG	
Participation levels	Informing	Being informed	◉	◉	◉	Newsletters and factsheets were used in ESDNVG and RSSTI respectively to inform the governmental agencies only. A public meeting was not sufficient to inform such a wide range of stakeholders such as the Fayoum and New Valley Governorates
		Giving information	●	●	◉	Data was collected from stakeholders by survey and interviews in both FEDP and RSSTI. But in ESDNVG it was rectified by them
	Consultation		◉	◉	○	In FEDP, there was only one meeting in the Governorate capital. In RSSTI, there were meetings for a specific group about a specific issue. In ESDNVG, there was no discussion but a questionnaire was conducted during the campaign to raising awareness
	Placation (interactive participation)		◉	◉	○	In both FEDP and RSSTI developing the plan was between governmental agencies. In ESDNVG, some proposals and visions were provided for the planning team to decide the final outcomes with the government
The clear role and good performance of stakeholders during the process	Governmental group	Clearly defined	◉	●	◉	The role had been defined by funders as a contract
		Performance	◉	●	◉	RSSTI was the best performer because the funder linked performance with its grant
	The other group	Clearly defined	○	○	○	The roles were not defined
		Performance	○	○	○	The performance was not good because the role was not clear

● Fully achieved ◉ Partially achieved ○ Not achieved

Source: The author

i) ***Informing***, means sharing information in two directions – between stakeholders and planning team. Initially this was used to tell the stakeholders about the planning activities but without giving them any chance to provide feedback. In this regard, one of the interviewee, reflecting the view of the others, asserted that *"In*

ESDVNG and RSSTI, the planning team utilised the newsletters and factsheets[64] every six months to inform stakeholders in general, and government agencies in particular, about the planned activities and progress" (EC-20). Another interviewee claimed that *"The newsletters of ESDNVG were of extremely limited value because they were written in English and not accessible to the key audiences. They were either illiterate or could not speak English. In my opinion, the working group should have used familiar language and ideas for the audience in order to achieve the informing objectives"* (EC-26). Further to this, another interviewee claimed that *"Although public meetings had been used at [an] early stage of the FEDP process to try to inform the stakeholders about the progress, limited numbers of them were informed because these public meetings were conducted only in the main communities"* (PS-11). Many interviewees commented that the planning teams could have better informed a broad spectrum of stakeholders, particularly the local communities, using easy and cheap techniques such as leaflets, posters, local newspapers and advertising at local occasions such as Friday prayers[65] (EC-17 and EC-3).

The second direction of the informing stage was getting information from the stakeholders. According to the documents from each of the three initiatives, data collection was understood to be a good opportunity to contact stakeholders, particularly the local communities, who were intended to provide the main source of local information (CISS 2010; TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004). For instance, in FEDP, informal interviews with local communities and intensive field investigation were used to identify the existing situation as well as any constraints and potential for ecotourism development in Fayoum (CISS & EDG 2008). In this respect, one interviewee noted that the *"FEDP team, in the early stage of the process, surveyed and interviewed only local communities and craftspeople located around the coast of Qarun Lake. However, they ignored the communities adjacent to other protected*

[64]Newsletters and factsheets were means of disseminating information about the project and keeping in touch with stakeholders during planning activities.

[65] The Friday prayer is an important weekly event. The team could use this event to announce the initiative's progress without any great cost (EC-3).

areas such as Wadi El-Rayan" (PS-20). Nevertheless, the convener of RSSTI hired a team of senior social scientists and experienced field researchers to gather the data from local communities and the managers of existing tourism services and facilities through both a survey and individual interviews (TDA et al. 2003). Furthermore, the *"RSSTI team trained the representatives of TDA, EEAA and RSG to use the data collection techniques to engage [in the] gathering data process"* (EC-22).

In ESDNVG, the planning team also conducted field surveys throughout the study area; although, initially, local stakeholders were not involved in the survey work. However, local communities and other stakeholder groups were involved partly in checking and completing what had been identified as being missing data, although this was one year into the initiative's schedule (CISS & EDG 2012). This had multiple benefits: *"To widen the stakeholders who participated in the project and improve and rectify the data gaps, an awareness-raising campaign was conducted in three oases of the NVG"* (PS-21).

ii) ***The second level of involvement was consultation***, which means discussing the key issues, challenges and solutions without any commitment from the decision-maker (Taschner & Fiedler 2009). Consultation aims to widen stakeholder participation through an involvement of key legitimate stakeholders who have perhaps been left outside the stakeholder network (non-participants). However, this was not achieved, as one interviewee noted: *"Consultation in Egyptian initiatives did not increase stakeholder participation because the majority of attendees in consultation activities had already been participants in the process"* (PS-4). For example, the consultation meeting for FEDP included the same stakeholder representatives who were already involved in the planning process (PS-16). In this respect, one interviewee claimed that *"The conveners of regional ecotourism development [such] as FEDP need to involve non-participants who had not directly participated in the process during the consultation meetings to enhance the agreements and widen external support"* (EC-28). Another interviewee commented that *"Although the consultation was a good chance to involve a wide number of the local communities in regional*

planning, particularly in the inhabited areas [such] as the Fayoum[66]*, the working group organised only one consultation meeting in the capital of the Fayoum and ignored all the other areas"* (PS-18) – thereby excluding many who could and should have had a say in the process.

In ESDNVG, no formal consultation meetings were held although the convener tried to use the questionnaire to get feedback from stakeholders beyond the network. However, this was unsuccessful because, as one of the interviewee explained, *"It would have been more effective to conduct open discussions with stakeholders about their viewpoints because their answers from the questionnaires were very brief and careless"* (EC-27). Moreover, the convener did not extend the involvement of the stakeholders beyond those participants contacted during the awareness-raising campaign (CISS & EDG 2010).

In relation to RSSTI, the working team did not use consultation as an inclusive process with all potential stakeholders. Instead, they used it more narrowly with specific groups to discuss a particular issue. For example, they held a consultation meeting with the key managers in the hospitality industry to get feedback about the guidelines for green hotels during the Green Hotel Campaign. Others felt such a targeted approach could have been more usefully and widely utilised: *"There were specific issues where it would be more effective to have focused discussion with representatives of the key relevant stakeholder groups. This would have been appropriate with the land use management plan"* (EC-7). Hence, local communities were not formally involved in any consultation events as the planning team felt that interviews were the best method to gain their perspectives because of widespread illiteracy (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

Consequently, as mentioned above, consultation should have been used to support collaborative ecotourism planning at the regional scale to increase stakeholder participation, with local communities being the main target groups for consultation

[66] The Fayoum was inhabited by 2.51 million people (CAPMAS 2006)

meetings. However, they were not well engaged in any of the case studies. No new approaches were introduced to broaden local involvement in any of the consultation discussions. Any consultations may have been more effective if locals had been given specific options about the vision or plans in order to give structured feedback. Too often consultation events were too abstract.

iii) ***A third level of participation*** was interactive participation where stakeholders were involved in analysing the existing situation and suggesting alternatives but decisions about the final outcomes were taken by the government. Although it was important that all stakeholders should participate in developing the solutions, many stakeholders were absent at this stage and governmental groups tended to dominate (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012). For example, in the FEDP, the only stakeholders who participated in producing the plan were the representatives of the regional office and the middle government employees. In this respect, one of the interviewees remarked that *"The middle governmental employees [were] involved, with the planning team, to produce the development plan using multiple brain storming workshops without inviting the other stakeholder groups"* (EC-1). This created implementation problems: *"The lack of success in implementation was a natural result of excluding the main stakeholders such as local communities, private sector and NGOs from producing the plan"* (NG-1). Similarly, in RSSTI, the central offices of the TDA, EEAA and representatives of the RSG cooperated in drawing up the plan. In this regard, one interviewee remarked that *"Although co-producing the plan mitigated some conflicts between different governmental agencies, such as EEAA and TDA, the presence of the private sector, for example, would have added more viable options based on the tourism market and knowledge of the competition between centres"* (EC-24). The private sector was considered to be one of the most important stakeholders in producing the RSSTI development plan because it understands the market characteristics – the costs and difficulties associated with implementation. Hence, one of the interviewee commented that *"Implementation of the RSSTI plan has been very limited. One visitor centre had been completed by 2005. I think the*

outcomes might have been better if all the stakeholders had been involved in developing appropriate and relevant outcomes. I do not know how private sector stakeholders could commit to a plan that did not meet their needs and interests" (PrS-2)

In ESDNVG, the majority of stakeholders proposed a vision and recommendations for the ecotourism development in the area. Then the planning team and the governmental decision-makers produced the final outcomes based around these proposals (CISS & EDG 2010). Hence, as one interviewee noted, *"The stakeholders' role in this initiative was as advisors to the planning group. The planning team then simply produced the final outcomes without returning to the stakeholders to gain their perspective on the proposed outcomes"* (EC-26). Another interviewee claimed that *"The outcomes would have been better if the planning team had discussed with the stakeholders their final proposals having chosen from options that had been developed together"* (EC-25).

The research will now turn to discussing stakeholder roles during the planning process. Stakeholder roles and responsibilities need to be defined in the early stages of the process to avoid wasting time and energy. Indeed, all the Egyptian initiatives defined the responsibilities of the main partners, notably government agencies (EEAA, TDA, and the Governorates) through Terms of Reference (TOR) or separate contracts (EC-20). Often *"The funders defined the government agencies' responsibilities through a contract, early in the initiative, making them accountable during the process"* (EC-24). For example, *"In RSSTI, the funder linked its grant to each agency based and the delivery of their defined responsibilities. These agencies were much more engaged than the others in the RSSTI process"* (PS-10), because they were incentivised to be involved.

On the other hand, there was no clear role for other stakeholder groups in any of the three initiatives. In this respect, one interviewee remarked that *"Although there are detailed working plans for each initiative including the tasks and timing, the working teams did not identify the stakeholders (except governmental agencies) that*

would be involved in each task" (EC-29). Likewise, another interviewee pinpointed that *"Identification of clear responsibilities of the stakeholders and the timing of their engagement could have encouraged them to be more effectively involved"* (EC-21). Furthermore, it was noted by another interviewee that *"Determining when and how stakeholders could be involved might have increased their presence and commitment to the tasks because they could organise their own agendas. Also, stakeholder involvement should have been equally distributed throughout the planning process, rather than involving them a lot in specific stages and then excluding them totally from others"* (EC-8). As the roles of the stakeholders had not been defined, the majority were only involved in the informing stage and excluded from developing the plans and outcomes (EC-24). One explanation claimed by an expert was that *"In my opinion, the main reason why stakeholder roles were not well defined was that the conveners did not analyse nor understand stakeholder potentials and those aspects of the project they would be most interested in supporting"* (EC-26).

Thus, to enhance ecotourism development planning in Egypt, *"A matrix of the stakeholders' roles [individual and group] during the planning process, based on their interests and influence levels, should be attached to the working plan to increase their commitment"* (EC-3).

Synthesis

Stakeholder roles and their level of participation during three case studies have been evaluated against the conceptual framework (Table 7-3). It is apparent that the participation in Egypt is still tokenistic and is confined to the first three rungs of the participation ladder: informing, consulting and placating. Egypt needs to alleviate the limitations of the current participation approaches through more active participation and empowerment of all stakeholders in decision-making. Furthermore, the role of the governmental agency stakeholders has only been effectively defined through contracts.

7.2.2 Stakeholder involvement methods

This section will examine which techniques were used to encourage stakeholder involvement during the planning process. Table (7-4) provides a synthesis of the findings.

From a documentary review of all three initiatives, in general all the methods of stakeholder involvement used came from the administrative-orientated techniques category (see Chapter Three). These methods primarily focused around information exchange through such activities as public hearings, large and small group public meetings, newsletters, factsheets, individual and group interviews or education and support building including workshops, seminars, formal and professional training. This was highlighted by one of the interviewees who noted that *"Although there were a variety of stakeholder involvement methods used during the Egyptian ecotourism initiatives, the majority of them focused on informing and training the stakeholders rather than actively involving them so that they had an input into decision-making"* (EC-29). Another interviewee noted that *"Using a variety of involvement techniques from informing to decision-making is required during ecotourism development planning to produce a plan reflecting stakeholder views"* (EC-22). Hence, another interviewee claimed that *"Informing or education techniques cannot alone fulfil the requirements of a collaborative approach for ecotourism development planning"* (EC-17).

With regard to the appropriateness and sufficiency of the involvement methods utilised in each phase of the process, the following observations can be made:

i) ***During the diagnosis phase***, the same approaches were evident in all three initiatives. The first was for the use of data collection (information-gathering) techniques such as individual or group interviews and surveys. There were different opinions about the appropriateness of an individual interview technique during this phase of the planning process. In this regard, one of the interviewees remarked that *"Face-to-face interviews were an appropriate technique especially for indigenous communities, characterised by widespread illiteracy. They helped to clarify the*

questions and gather precise information" (EC-10). Another interviewee highlighted another advantage in that *"Informal interviews, conducted during FEDP, motivated craftspeople and local communities to engage in effective discussion and proposing important ideas to promote ecotourism development in Fayoum"* (EC-1).

On the other hand, several interviewees realised there were some drawbacks to the face-to-face interview for regional development. As one interviewee remarked: *"Although the in-person method to collect data is appropriate for indigenous communities, it is insufficient for large-scale development with geographically dispersed stakeholders [such] as the Fayoum and the NVG. Therefore, the planning team needed to look at complementary techniques such as drop-in centres"* (EC-8). Another interviewee recognised *"The time and financial constraints for only using face-to-face interviews or survey methods for data collection for regional scale ecotourism development"* (EC-3). But in some studies they might be appropriate: *"Face-to-face interviews were enough during the RSSTI process because the local communities consisted of 19 small settlements. But it was not enough for the FEDP because it has 218 villages and cities"* (EC-28). Therefore the approach needs to be appropriate to the regional context.

In addition to the interviews, the RSSTI was only the initiative that conducted group workshops and field trips to train representatives of governmental agencies how to use the data collection techniques. According to one of the interviewees: *"These training events, at the beginning of the RSSTI process, were appropriate, sufficient and necessary for the data collection stage"* (EC-22).

Table (7-4) The appropriateness and sufficiency of the stakeholder involvement methods during the planning process

			Performance of Egyptian initiatives			Comments
			FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG	
The appropriateness of the stakeholder involvement methods at each stage	i) Diagnosis	Face-to-face interview	◉	●	◉	It was adequate but not enough for large-scale developments with geographically dispersed stakeholders such as the Fayoum and the NVG
		Public meeting*	○	○	○	They were inappropriate, due to a big number of attendees and the time framework to respond to stakeholder inquiries being too limited. Little information was passed to the stakeholders
		Data collection training	?	●	?	The event was adequate and sufficient for this stage in RSSTI
	ii) Analysis	Conference	?	●	?	
		Workshop	?	◉	●	The ESDVG provided a good example of using workshops during the analysis phase
		Questionnaire	?	?	○	It was inappropriate for this stage
	iii) Development	Workshop	◉	◉	?	It was an adequate technique for producing the solutions after sharing the information; however, there were some limitations
		Public hearing	○	○	?	
		The best practice exchange	?	?	●	It was a good example of an effective educating event because it combined practical and theoretical sessions
	iv) After the plan had been made	Awareness-raising programmes & campaign	◉	◉	◉	They were not useful enough. They would have been more valuable if they had been concerned with building the stakeholder commitment to the plan and its implementation

● Fully achieved ◉ Partially achieved ○ Not achieved ? Not used

Source: The author

* There were many forms of public meeting, such as kick-off workshop, seminar and consultation meeting

Note: New Valley Cultural Week was another event in the ESDNV but not related to the phases

The second approach designed to introduce the initiatives to the stakeholders included public meetings and preliminary workshops. These were useful for disseminating information, clarifying issues and gaining support for the project. However, they had their limitations. One interviewee claimed that *"In the three initiatives, although a public meeting was used for informing the stakeholders about the projects, little information was disseminated because of the large number of attendees and a limited time frame which meant many stakeholder inquiries remained*

unanswered" (EC-20). Another interviewee highlighted that *"The public meetings were dominated by the governmental representatives, who were representing the most powerful groups"* (PS-20). For example, during the first FEDP seminar the high-level government employees from the national ministries and authorities such as MOT, TDA and EEAA, consumed much of the time with long speeches. Therefore, the planning team was unable to reveal any information to the stakeholders (EC-1). Moreover, one interviewee highlighted that *"to convey the information about the initiative to a wide range of the stakeholders, particularly the local people, the planning team need to distribute relevant information using understandable language through the public meetings"* (EC-3).

ii) ***During the analysis phase***, three different approaches for involving the stakeholders in both the RSSTI and the ESDNVG were used (CISS & EDG 2012; Snyder 2004), in contrast to the FEDP, which did not use any approach for involving stakeholders in an analysis of the existing situation (CISS & EDG 2008).

During the analysis phase of the RSSTI process, a Sustainable Tourism Egypt (STE) conference was organised, which focused on ecotourism development generally throughout Egypt (EC-22). It provided a good opportunity to share national and international experience about ecotourism development. The second workshop was designed to discuss the outcomes from the analysis stage. However, this was not a very inclusive process, as one of the interviewees remarked: *"RSSTI conducted a workshop encompassing the members of the steering committee and higher governmental employees. But no regional office employees were involved. This meeting was dominated by the most vocal and powerful person"* (EC-21). Indeed, another interviewee argued that *"The outcomes of the workshop could have been more effective if representatives from the regional office and RSG had been involved"* (EC-2).

Nevertheless, the ESDNVG initiative provided a good example of using the workshops to involve the stakeholders during the analysis phase. It also used a variety of techniques to enhance stakeholder performance (CISS & EDG 2010). For instance,

a series of learning sessions were held to teach stakeholders how to build the SWOT analysis. Furthermore, the convener divided the participants into small discussion groups to ensure that the voices of all the stakeholders could be heard during the discussions (EC-27). One of the interviewees described the process: *"To enhance the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement, the convener divided them into small groups (10-14 people) to prepare the SWOT analysis of ecotourism development in the NVG"* (PS-21). Similarly, CISS and EDG (2010) highlighted the fact that during the workshop each group of stakeholders presented their outputs and discussed them with other groups, through guidance from the facilitator. Moreover, the planning team used an interactive informal technique through the workshops to motivate the interaction between stakeholders by asking some stakeholders to play the role of spokesperson for their group and explain ecotourism development principles and their importance to the NVG. Hence, one of the interviewees argued that *"ESDNVG provided some activities to encourage communication between the stakeholders and test their knowledge about the ecotourism development planning through role-playing techniques"* (EC-20). Another interviewee highlighted the importance of *"Individual homework being given to each participant in the workshop to help prepare a long-term vision for ecotourism development in the NVG. This was good to encourage all participants to think about what they could contribute to [the] next day's discussions"* (EC-27).

Despite these efforts there was still scope to enhance the effectiveness of engagement during this phase. One of the interviewees, for example argued that *"Although three separate series of the workshops were conducted in the main three oases, there was no combined outcome. In my opinion, it would have been better if their combined outputs had been explored through a public meeting or distributed to the stakeholders to give feedback"* (EC-29). Furthermore, whilst a questionnaire technique was used in the analysis phase of ESDNVG, CISS and EDG (2010) argued that in practice the questionnaire was not an appropriate technique to gain meaningful input from the stakeholders. In this regard, one interviewee commented that *"Although the facilitator gave concise instructions about how to complete the questionnaire and*

the questions were very easy, a large number of the stakeholders had difficulties knowing how to answer [the] questions" (EC-27). Consequently, the leader of the planning team commented that *"Stakeholder answers to the questionnaire were very brief and careless. So the questionnaire was not an adequate tool to get meaningful feedback from the stakeholders. Conducting an open discussion about their viewpoints was more effective"* (EC-1). Another interviewee commented that *"Stakeholders in the NVG generally preferred to express their views verbally not in writing. So the questionnaire proved to be an inadequate technique especially in the analysis phase, which needed more discussion and interaction between stakeholders"* (EC-10).

iii) ***The development phase*** included similar involvement strategies in both RSSTI and FEDP, notably workshops and a public hearing. By contrast, ESDNVG focused on a best practice exchange between stakeholders from Fayoum and NVG. It proved to be a good educational event focused on practical issues associated with ecotourism development. It included a little theoretical background, but concentrated on sharing experiences between the stakeholders (CISS 2012a).

In relation to the RSSTI and FEDP involvement events, although the workshops were an adequate technique for producing solutions after sharing the information, they nevertheless experienced some limitations in both initiatives. According to one interviewee, who reflects the views of the others, *"Due to the large number of attendees in the workshop and the speaking time being limited, there was little actual participation from many of the attendees"* (EC-24). Another interviewee commented that *"Unfortunately, not all participants were given enough time to provide their input. [This was] particularly true for the women. This was because the speaking time was dependent on the power of the speakers"* (PS-20). In the same way, another interviewee remarked that *"Many stakeholders were not interactive enough and were not inclined to participate in the discussions"* (PS-18). Further to this, another interviewee commented that *"The small discussion groups representing diverse stakeholder interests were needed to enrich the discussion and the outcomes of the workshop"* (EC-6).

Similarly, the public hearing is intended to be a significant event according to the legal requirements in Egypt. It needs to get feedback about the final outcomes of the initiatives from a wide spectrum of stakeholders. However, in both RSSTI and FEDP, one public hearing was not sufficient for a large-scale development with geographically dispersed stakeholders (EC-24). Hence one interviewee emphasised that *"It would have been more effective if several public meetings had been held in the main municipalities"* (EC-26). Moreover, participant feedback was very limited because the majority of them did not actually know very much about the initiative. In this regard, one interviewee claimed that *"The meeting time in FEDP, for instance, was wasted by responding to stakeholder enquiries and encouraging them to give comments about the plan"* (EC-27). According to another interviewee, who reflected the views of others, *"It would have been a more effective meeting if a summary of the previous steps and main outputs were printed and distributed at the beginning of the public hearing. Then the meeting could concentrate on its main objectives: giving information and getting feedback on the final outcomes"* (EC-26).

iv) ***Stakeholder involvement events after the plan had been made*** were concerned with awareness-raising programmes and campaigns for running ecotourism activities. In this regard, one interviewee commented that *"The majority of raising awareness [events were] not useful enough for the stakeholders because they focused on the principles of ecotourism development and guidelines for running such activities. These would have been more effective in earlier stages"* (PS-20). Another interviewee argued that *"The education events would be more helpful if they combined theoretical and practical sessions as the best practice exchange within the ESDVNG process did"* (PS-18). Another interviewee argued that *"The education events would have been more valuable at this stage if they had been concerned with building the stakeholder commitment to the plan and implementation"* (PS-12). Hence the focus of these events was poorly targeted.

The research will identify key deficiencies that affected the effectiveness of many of the meetings. First, many meetings were not well prepared in advance by the

conveners. In this regard, one of the interviewees noted that *"The main factor which affected the quality of the meetings was the ineffectiveness of the presentation materials. There was a lot of technical information presented and the discussion was not understandable to the stakeholders, particularly the local communities and artisans. Therefore, several of them became disinterested during the meeting"* (PS-19). Another interviewee commented that *"Many stakeholders had several critical points they wished to raise during the meeting but the facilitators did not take these into account. In my opinion, the facilitator should ask the stakeholders, particularly the organisations, to submit their expected information for the meeting and consider them in discussion outlines"* (EC-3). In the same way, another interviewee remarked that *"There was no detailed agenda for the meetings. It would have been better if a draft agenda had been sent to the main stakeholders in advance, asking for their comments so the meetings could be more focused"* (EC-17).

Furthermore, the scheduling of meetings was often inappropriate for the majority of the stakeholders because they took place during the working week. In this regard, one of the interviewees claimed that *"Although evenings and weekends are the most appropriate time for stakeholder engagement, no meetings were held at this time"* (NG-1). Another interviewee highlighted that *"I do not know why all the initiatives insisted on conducting the stakeholder meetings during the daytime. They realised that this time was inappropriate for many stakeholder groups, except governmental employees"* (EC-16). In the same way, another interviewee claimed that *"It would have been more effective if the planning team, in the first meeting, established a calendar of future events and asked the stakeholders to review it according to their availability and preferred times"* (LC-2).

There was also a problem with the lack of time and proper structuring of the meetings. For instance, for the majority of the meetings during FEDP and RSSTI initiatives some of stakeholders, with a strong voice and power, were taking up most of the discussion time (PrS-2 and LC-1). To be more specific, one interviewee reflected the view of the others by asserting that *"Because there was no structure to*

the meetings giving all stakeholders an outlet to express their views, the meetings were dominated by representatives of the public sector. They were the most powerful" (EC-24). Another interviewee recognised that *"The structure of the stakeholder involvement meetings should be such that more time was devoted to listening to stakeholder views and questions, more than speaking to them"* (EC-3).

One of the most important deficiencies in meeting organisation was the lack of follow-up to keep the stakeholders informed of meeting outcomes. Documentation from the meetings was not sent to the stakeholders so they could review what had been agreed and follow-up actions (EC-8). As one interviewee commented: *"The minutes or report from the meetings were not available to all the stakeholders. Many therefore could not remember what had been agreed at the next meeting"* (EC-29).

Synthesis

The stakeholder involvement methods and events during the three ecotourism planning initiatives were evaluated against the conceptual framework. Table (7-4) highlights the extent to which these methods have been used and their appropriateness and sufficiency in delivering the intended outcomes at each stage of the process. Several shortcomings are readily apparent.

7.2.3 Mechanisms used to motivate stakeholder participation

This section will examine the procedures used to motivate various stakeholders to engage with the Egyptian ecotourism planning process (Table 7-5). Indeed, Egyptian ecotourism initiatives do not prescribe specific mechanisms to motivate the participation of any stakeholder group during the process. ESDNVG was the only initiative that used two different forms of direct material incentives (as discussed in Chapter Three): cash incentive for the local communities and in kind for the private sector (CISS & EDG 2012).

ESDNVG used compensation, offering travel expenses to meetings and time off work compensation to motivate representatives of the local communities to engage in meetings and workshops at different stages in the process (EC-1). In this respect, one interviewee noted how *"In the ESDVNG, all the local community representatives*

were given the same amount of money for attending meetings during the planning process" (EC-27). In addition, another interviewee highlighted that *"Local communities in ESDNVG were interested in participating in the process because it was the first initiative concerned with ecotourism development in the area and they expected that it would make a significant enhancement of their lives"* (PS-21). Similarly, ESDNVG documents stated that the planning team commented how interested local groups had been in engaging in various ecotourism activities from the outset (CISS & EDG 2012). The conveners utilised this opportunity to encourage a wide number of local communities to participate in planning activities. Moreover, due to local poverty many of the local community participants were enabled to attended meetings and workshops because of the payment (EC-20).

Table (7-5) The mechanism of the stakeholder motivation to participate in the planning process

		Performance of Egyptian initiatives			Comments
		FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG	
The appropriateness of the motivational techniques of each stakeholder group	Local communities	○	○	◉	ESDNVG used a monetary incentive for all the local people engaged with the planning process. The monetary incentive was not sufficient for the community leader, who needed legitimacy or prestige incentives more than money
	Private sector	○	○	●	ESDNVG used a good technique but too late - two years after the process had commenced
	Public sector	○	○	○	There is no motivation for representatives of the public sector to engage productively. Should they be encouraged to enhance their inputs
Providing the financial resources in the initiative's budget to motivate local communities		○	○	◉	There was no availability of financial resource in the initiative budget. However, ESDNVG provided compensation by meeting expenses

● Fully achieved ◉ Partially achieved ○ Not achieved

Source: The author

However, another interviewee suggested that *"This monetary incentive really was not sufficient. It was proved equally to all those that attended and was not linked to their inputs into the process. To enhance the efficiency of stakeholder participation the monetary incentive should have been linked with their responsibilities and roles during the process"* (EC-3). Furthermore, another interviewee claimed that *"Although the importance of the money was an incentive for local individuals, it was not really*

appropriate for the community leaders" (EC-29), who *"needed legitimacy or prestige more than the money, such as giving them enough room to express their views or sharing power and responsibilities with other key stakeholders"* (EC-15).

None of the case studies' budgets explicitly included a budget line to enhance stakeholder motivation. However, the conveners of the ESDNVG project provided local individuals with monetary incentives from the budget for meeting expenses. In this way, *"The convening team added attendees expenses for each meeting or workshop to its own expenses claim. This helped local people participate"* (PS-21). Due to a lack of financial resources in any of the budgets, other tools had to be developed to try to motivate stakeholders to participate in the planning process. For instance, purpose-driven incentives identify the initiative's aims and how the project could fulfil stakeholders personal goals by emphasising the importance of their involvement during the process. In this respect, one of the interviewees confirmed that *"In motivating the stakeholders, they should understand the importance of the initiative and how ecotourism development will alleviate their problems or enhance their life or business opportunities? They also need to understand what the expected added value from their participation during the process will be"* (EC-3). Many interviewees asserted that building a sense of stakeholder ownership in the initiative outcomes could have been an effective incentive (EC-11 and EC-12). For instance, the ownership of local people could have been built by designating a specific proportion of the plan for investors from the local communities and returning a portion of the benefits directly to, them in terms of services or jobs (EC- 8). Moreover, the convener needs to identify the incentives necessary for each stakeholder group (particularly the local community) at an early stage of the planning process to consider the cost of this to the programme, either as part of the initiative budget, or from seeking external sponsors.

The ENSDVG also used an interesting and appropriate technique to motivate the private sector involvement during the process. The private sector (represented by hoteliers, local guides, tour operators and investors) was incentivised by gaining

access to a copy of the New Valley database and proposed ecotourism itineraries as a mechanism to enhance their business opportunities (CISS 2012b). Although this incentive was identified late in the process, two years after the project had commenced, it did encourage private sector involvement during the last six months of the initiative, particularly in implementing the Propulsive Ecotourism Centre (EC-20). It was noted that *"The private sector was motivated after attending a good presentation of the proposed itineraries and receiving a printed copy of New Valley Database in a unique publication, during the event New Valley Cultural Week event"* (PS-21). Indeed, another interviewee noted that *"In my opinion, the private sector performance during the planning process could have been better if the planning team had clarified, at the outset, that they would gain access to the New Valley Database, particularly as the private sector did not have updated maps of the ecotourism potentials in the NVG"* (PS-19).

In relation to the FEDP and RSSTI initiatives, there were no explicit motivation mechanisms used to try and engage stakeholders during the process. Furthermore, the local stakeholders were reluctant to engage because of their experiences from previous initiatives, as local people did not expect to receive any benefit or added value from these initiatives (EC-5 and LC-1). As one interviewee noted: *"In FEDP, the response of local people to participate in this initiative was met with negativity because they had engaged in five previous planning processes before FEDP. There had been no discernible benefit to their life"* (EC-28). So, appropriate mechanisms to encourage engagement could have been better integrated into design of the processes (EC-24).

Furthermore, public sector representatives also needed to be motivated to enhance their performance during the planning process. Many simply and passively participated as a part of their routine job. They could have been more proactively encouraged to engage if their performance could have been more directly linked to promotion criteria in their parent agencies. In this respect, one of the interviewees noted that *"The public sector is one of the most important stakeholders in ecotourism*

development. Their representatives, particularly at regional and local level, could have been motivated to be more proactively engaged in the process" (PS-3).

Synthesis

The incentive techniques for engaging the stakeholders during Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives have been evaluated against the conceptual framework (Table 7-5). It is apparent that there was a lack of incentivisation to encourage engagement during the planning processes of both the FEDP and RSSTI. However, ESDNVG did used incentives to try to encourage participation by offering monetary compensation to local communities and access to database information about ecotourism potentials to the private sector. Both were reasonably successful.

7.2.4 Procedures used to prepare stakeholders to be engaged in the planning process

The preparation of the stakeholders is a critical step in the participation process both before and during their engagement. This is particularly true with ecotourism because the educational component has become significant, and elevated to a priority as part of a good ecotourism development planning process (CISS & EDG 2012). UNDP (2009) also emphasised that during the planning process participants need training in consensus-based negotiation and a comprehensive understanding of the terms of reference that provide both process structure and expected outcomes. Therefore, the preparatory phase would have been a good chance to educate stakeholders about the key principles of ecotourism development and negotiation processes (EC- 8). This section will investigate the procedures to prepare the stakeholders to engage with the ecotourism planning process.

A review of documentation concerning the Egyptian initiatives revealed that ecotourism development characteristics and principles are not well known, and many stakeholders were not really prepared or qualified to participate in the planning process (CISS & EDG 2010). Many interviewees emphasised that, due to an absence of basic knowledge about ecotourism development and participation mechanisms, stakeholder participation in all three initiatives was ineffective (EC-20 and EC-24).

The preparation of stakeholders focused on raising their awareness of running ecotourism activities in an environmentally sustainability manner. However, such activities usually took place too late, either at the middle or end of the process (Table 7-6) (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012). For example, the ESDNVG initiative held three awareness-raising activities. The first two were held a year into the project and the third event during the last six months of the initiative (CISS 2012b). Similarly, in FEDP, the awareness-raising programme was only designed for, and accessible to, the public sector. It was also delivered during the last six months of the FEDP, after other participation activities had finished. It was limited in scope to enabling participants to understand the basic meaning and potential of ecotourism (CISS & EDG 2008). In this respect, one of the interviewees claimed that *"The planning team defined the needs of each stakeholder group as promoting the ecotourism development and enhancing their participation during the process. No event was delivered to address their gaps in knowledge except for some training sessions for FTA and Governorate staff about the principles of ecotourism development held at the end of the planning process"* (PS-20). Another interviewee reflected that *"It would have been better if the awareness-raising events had been held in the early stages of the planning process to encourage effective participation"* (PS-18).

RSSTI was the only initiative which attempted to prepare the stakeholders before plan-making commenced through:

- A series of workshops and field training conducted for the TDA, EEAA and RSG representatives (in the second month of the initiative) to teach them the data collecting techniques, such as GPS, Remote Sensing and GIS software (TDA et al. 2003). One of the participants reflected the view of the others, asserting that "*It was beneficial to attend courses and field training before starting data collection. The initiative would have been more effective if this system (I meant the training before participation) had continued throughout the whole planning process*" (PS-10); and

- A group of seminars trying to emphasise the importance of ecotourism development as an approach to sustainable tourism development. They focused on the difference between ecotourism and other tourism types, and its importance in expanding Egypt's share of the global tourism market (TDA, USAID & RSSTI 2004).

Other activities were conducted during the second half of the initiative. These events were largely concerned with environmental awareness raising and monitoring resource impacts and campaigning for existing hotels to adopt green hotel guidelines (TDA et al. 2003). These activities were not however concerned with the stakeholder performance during the process (EC-22).

With regard to the inadequacy of preparatory procedures, one of the interviewees reflected the view of the others, asserting that *"Although there was widespread illiteracy amongst the local communities, none of the initiatives really had any clear mechanisms to enhance the awareness of ecotourism development during the planning process"* (PS-18). Furthermore, the local communities are indigenous and they need significant effort to raise their understanding of ecotourism development and to clearly identify their roles during the development process. However, none of the three initiatives paid enough attention to them during the preparatory programmes (EC-2). *"The preparatory programmes for the stakeholders should have included two main components; ecotourism development principles and participation mechanisms and stakeholder involvement during the planning process"* (EC-23). Furthermore, any educational events that have been completed after the planning process were related to the running of the ecotourism development, but not related to preparing the stakeholders to engage with the process (PS-20). Another interviewee commented that *"Because there was a lack of the basic knowledge of ecotourism development and participation requirements during its process, the planning team need to put in enough time within the initiative schedule to prepare all stakeholders, particularly local communities"* (PS-10). Another interviewee remarked

that *"The performance of the stakeholders during the planning process would have been more effective if they were well prepared for their roles"* (EC-17).

Furthermore, one of the interviewees highlighted that *"both FEDP and RSSTI initiatives were set up after several previous attempts of tourism development. It would have been better for stakeholder preparation if the planning teams had examined and evaluated previous attempts to identify what is the new and what [that] would be added in the recent initiatives?"* (EC-5). One of the local communities of FEDP claimed that *"We participated in the meetings of FEDP without knowing what the differences between the traditional tourism and ecotourism were, nor how the recent initiative differed from previous ones. Therefore, our participation was only about attending meetings without any value"* (LC-1). It was also noted by another interviewee that *"Exploring a summary [of] and learnt lessons from previous ecotourism initiatives with stakeholders in the early stage, and focusing on the participation techniques, would have been invaluable for preparing them before their engagement"* (EC-26). In the same way, another interview commented that *"The initiatives of ecotourism development were sequential [RSSTI in 2004, FEDP in 2008 and ESDNVG in 2012]. It would have been better if each initiative had provided a summary about [what] worked and why at the beginning of each initiative to enhance the stakeholder participation in the future projects"* (EC-28). According to one interviewee, who confirmed the views of the others: *"The funders and the majority of the planning teams were the same in both FEDP and ESDNVG initiatives. However, they did not explain the FEDP process and the challenges for stakeholder participation at the beginning of the EDVNG processes as means of enhancing the participants' performance"* (PS-9).

In addition, knowing the background to, and having a clear understanding of, the initiatives, their timeframes and the expected short- and long-term outputs are all essential to effectively engage most stakeholders (Preskill & Jones 2009). In this regard, one of the interviewees commented that *"clarifying the objectives and the outcomes of the initiatives to the stakeholders in the early stages should have been*

*important for motivating stakeholder engagement" (*EC-7). CISS (2012b) also emphasised that the distribution of all explanatory materials to the participants at the preparatory stage was also important in order to make sure that relevant information was conveyed to a wider audience.

Further to this, it was noted that *"The stakeholders came from various constituencies. They did not know each other, so they needed preparatory meetings [a series of small group activities] to explore their background and interests [which is] necessary to build and enhance their relationships before engagement"* (EC-8). In the same way, another interviewee noted that *"The planning team could utilise the preparatory meetings to recognise the stakeholder background interest in and influence over ecotourism development in order to prioritise their involvement during the process"* (EC-4). Similarly, CISS (2012b) highlighted that there was a variety of knowledge between the stakeholder groups, who required different levels of technical assistance. It was not possible to identify and address all of their needs during the preparatory activities. However, significant and basic knowledge should have been addressed in the early stages of the process to promote more effective participation.

With regard to the stakeholder groups that had been involved in the preparatory procedures, the representatives of the public sector were the main group that had been involved in awareness-raising and capacity-building events. In this respect, one of the interviewees highlighted that *"Delegates from the public sector, such as TDA, EEAA and Governorates, attended all the learning events in all three initiatives"* (PS-10). In the same way, another interviewee commented that *"Although the local communities and artisans are the main ingredients of ecotourism development in Fayoum, they were not involved in any awareness-raising event during FEDP"* (LC-1). To be more specific, one interviewee remarked that *"The local craftspeople and local guides of the Fayoum were not involved in any learning events during the FEDP but they had been involved in the best practice exchange event, four years after the FEDP started, during the ESDNVG initiative"* (EC-27). Further to this, private sector stakeholders were not interested in investing in ecotourism development because they did not see it

as being as beneficial as mass-tourism. The private sector was not involved in any awareness-raising event in any of the initiatives about the importance and economics of the ecotourism development (except for the Green Hotels Campaign and some activities of Awareness-raising Campaign during the RSSTI and ESDVNG processes respectively) (EC-23). Similarly, other groups lacked training, as one of the interviewees commented: *"NGO participants during the initiatives did not have any experience in ecotourism development before their engagement"* (EC-2). The NGOs could have played a pivotal role in supporting the ecotourism development if they were properly trained during the early stages of the process (EC-17).

Synthesis

It is apparent (see Table 7-7) that there was a lack of preparation procedures during all three initiatives. Most of the preparation events, in all three initiatives, focused on raising awareness amongst stakeholders about the running of ecotourism activities. Moreover, such activities usually took place towards the middle or the end of the process. The RSSTI was the only initiative that conducted two events at the early stage. One event trained the public sector representatives in data collection techniques and the second provided basic knowledge about the importance of ecotourism development. In general, there was a lack of preparing the stakeholders in participation techniques.

Table (7-6) Awareness-raising events during the planning process of the case studies

Date		Name of events	Target beneficiaries	The main objectives	Comments
ESDNVG initiative	December 2010 (in 12th month)	Awareness-raising campaign	Teachers and students (475) Employees in the tourism sector (150) Local communities and artisans (180)	Updating and analysing the database and ecotourism market as well as resource assessment by SWOT analysis	This campaign was conducted in the main three oases for 14 days (six days in Kharga and four days in each of Farafra and Dakhla)
	June 2011 (in 18th month)	Best practice exchange activities	Craftspeople, tourism authority, civil servants and tourist guides from both the NVG & Fayoum.	To exchange the experience with the FEDP stakeholders in handicraft methods and guiding tourists	It encompassed three events: i) four-day workshop training for craftspeople from both areas; ii) exchange training for tourism authority civil servants; and iii) three-day training workshop and fieldwork for tour guides
	April 2012 (in 28th month)	Capacity-building workshops	Eight selected people from civil servants and personnel of the handicraft centre	To enable management of the future Propulsive Ecotourism Centre and the initiative website	This event was a 10-day workshop covering computer skills. It also included communication and marketing skills
FEDP	Last six months	Raising awareness	Representatives of FTA, EEAA, TDA, and Fayoum Information Centre staff	The training programme enabled the participants to understand the ecotourism basics	Other capacity-building training programmes were proposed for the other group of stakeholders such as training for local guides and young architects, but they were not delivered
RSSTI initiative	Second Mon.	Data collection training	Representative of EEAA, TDA, and the RSG	To train them to use data collection techniques	It included workshops for theoretical information and field training for application
	Sixth Mon.	Seminar	The majority of stakeholder groups	To define the importance of ecotourism development as an approach to sustainable tourism development.	
	06/2002 (in 42nd month)	Raising environmental awareness	Public sector and local communities	To increase their understanding and acceptance of environmental policy	It encompassed a group of training workshops and beach and underwater clean-up campaigns
	01/2003 (in 46th month)	Training & awareness for Environmental Management System (EMS)	Representatives of EEAA, RSG and local communities	To enable proper functioning of the Environmental Management System	
	10/2003 (in 54th month)	Green Hotels Campaign	Managers of the existing hotels and representatives of EEAA and TDA	-To encourage hotel managers to adopt environmental best practices and provide environmentally friendly services - To disseminate best practices to other hotels and stakeholders in the region	- Visiting model hotels and observing environmental best practices in action - Publishing printed materials to explain best practices to new audiences - Conducting workshops to help hotels implement best practices
	2004 (in 56th month)	Monitoring & management of the resources	Representative of EEAA, TDA, and the RSG	To train them on Environmental Monitoring Checklists to attain sustainable visitor use and enjoyment	

Source: The author based on the initiatives' documents

Table (7-7) The procedures of the stakeholder preparation for engagement with the planning process compared with the conceptual framework

			Performance of Egyptian initiatives			Comments
			FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG	
The preparation events for stakeholders before and during the planning process	The topics had been covered	Participation techniques	○	◉	○	No preparatory events about participation mechanism except events to train the public sector delegates to use the data collection techniques in the early stage of the RSSTI
		Basic knowledge about Ecotourism development	◉	●	◉	A group of seminars to define the importance of ecotourism development as an approach to sustainable tourism development in the early stage of the RSSTI
	Stakeholder group had been prepared	Public sector	●	●	●	Public sector delegates involved in all the preparatory events
		Local communities	○	◉	◉	The local communities are primitive and they need significant efforts to raise their awareness and apportion their roles during the process; however, none of the three initiatives provided enough attention for them in the preparatory programmes
		Private sector	○	◉	◉	They were involved in the Green Hotels Campaign and some activities of Awareness-raising Campaign during the RSSTI and ESDVNG process respectively
		NGOs	○	○	○	They were not involved in any event

● Fully achieved ◉ Partially achieved ○ Not achieved

Source: The author

7.3 The evaluation procedures

This section will investigate the evaluation procedures used during the three Egyptian ecotourism initiatives using the framework outlined in Chapter Three. From a documentary review and responses of the interviewees it can be seen that procedures for the evaluation of the process were generally very limited before, during and after the process has been completed (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012; TDA et al. 2003). This tends to confirm previous experience.

Pre-process evaluations tend to evaluate the previous studies and attempt to avoid the problems and maximise the potentials of new initiatives. With the FEDP and RSSTI initiatives, because of several previous ecotourism development projects, the evaluation was confined to a quick review of these documents. One of the interviewees, reflecting the views of the others, commented that *"There have been*

attempts at ecotourism development in the Fayoum and the RSG which led to the same result: an inability to focus on implementation. This should have made an evaluation of these failed projects one of the most important requirements before starting any new initiatives, to mitigate and avoid any problems that had previously hindered the implementation" (EC-24). Indeed, the technical documents of the FEDP highlighted that one of the major objectives of the new initiative was to assess and update previous tourism development plans which had been prepared during the last decade (CISS & EDG 2008). The planning team therefore reviewed the previous five initiatives designed to address ecotourism development challenges in the Fayoum area. However, the general conclusions and comments did not affect the most recent FEDP process or outcomes (PS-5). Moreover, this exercise did not explain the reasons why plans were not implemented or suggest how implementation could be enhanced (EC-28 and Khalifa & El-Khateeb 2011).

Similarly, in RSSTI, the planning team provided a brief historical overview of sustainable tourism development initiatives in the RSG without any critical evaluation of process or outcomes to identify the main reasons for implementation difficulties (TDA et al. 2003). One of the interviewees claimed that *"The presence of several previous attempts at ecotourism development before the RSSTI project represented a good opportunity to determine the actual reasons for the lack of implementation especially if they had been well evaluated"* (EC-21). Another interviewee commented that *"The evaluation of the previous attempts should have been helpful for alleviating the environmental deterioration and attaining the sustainable tourism development"* (PS-10)

The second layer of evaluation reflects the process itself and stakeholder involvement. This evaluation was not utilised in any of the three initiatives except for an assessment of the awareness-raising campaign during the ESDNVG initiative, but the focus was more on the facilitation rather than the participants. The facilitators evaluated their time, space, the teamwork performance and training techniques (CISS & EDG 2010). In this regard, one of the interviewees remarked that *"The facilitators*

evaluated the awareness-raising campaign through indirect questions to the attendees and observing their reactions to the activities organised during the campaign" (EC-27). Another interviewee commented that *"The feedback about the outcome of the campaign was conducted by verbal questions from the facilitator to the attendees. This technique was insufficient to explain the audience views"* (PS-21). Furthermore, two of the interviewees claimed that *"The time devoted to feedback was so limited because it was conducted after the training had finished. The facilitator did not allocate enough time for evaluation, especially as the number of attendees was so large; consequently, the results of the evaluation were superficial"* (PS-19 and EC-27). Moreover, CISS and EDG (2010) emphasised that the campaign needed follow-up activity in the field to measure its impact on the participants.

But evaluation remained limited to these events, as one of the interviewees remarked: *"Although the EDSNVG conducted another three involvement events, the planning team did not evaluate any of them"* (EC-29). Indeed *"Although the Best Practice Exchange Activities were a new idea, to exchange and broaden the stakeholder knowledge, they were not evaluated to try to enhance the outcomes from future activities"* (EC-28).

Furthermore, early evaluations of the process may have helped to ensure more satisfactory outcomes and remedy any process problems (Cameron & Johnson 2004). In this regard, one of the interviewees remarked that *"Several objectives of collaborative planning could not have been evaluated except by assessing them throughout the process. This might have included whether equal opportunity was provided to all stakeholder groups during the consensus building process"* (EC-16).

The third level explores the outcome of the process, in some of the case studies were there any procedures for evaluating of the impacts of the initiatives' outcomes. In this respect, one of the interviewees, who reflected the views of the others, commented that *"Initiative outcomes were not evaluated. The management reports could be used as a good tool for follow-up, if they were concerned with the effectiveness of the outcomes and compared them with the targets of the initiative"*

(EC-24). On the other hand, *"The beneficiaries might be the most appropriate to follow-up the outcomes because the conveners, particularly the government agencies, may not be neutral during an evaluation of their own work"* (EC-3). Furthermore, one interviewee argued that *"Evaluation procedures should include both tangible and intangible outcomes, because in some initiatives the intangible outcomes may be more significant than the tangible. For example, shared knowledge and building consensus around the ecotourism development issues during the ESDNVG was one of the most important outcomes of the initiative"* (EC-20).

The main reason behind the weaknesses of the evaluation procedures during these three initiatives is that there is no legal basis in Egyptian regulations to support the evaluation of the planning outcomes, process or to nominate a specific evaluator. In this respect, many interviewees claimed that *"Although the Law No 119/2008 stipulates the review and update of spatial plans at least every five years to ensure they are compatible with the economic, social and environmental conditions, it does not require an evaluation of the outcomes before updating takes place"* (EC-3 and EC-13). Another interviewee argued that *"Updating the spatial plans should be based on an evaluation of their outcomes to define the challenges which hindered plan implementation to consider them during the new one"* (EC-17).

In addition, although the TDA and EEAA are the focal partners in ecotourism development planning in Egypt, they were not mandated to evaluate these initiatives (EC -22), even though each one of these agencies has a mandate to undertake such activities (EEAA 2013). As one interviewee commented: *"The regulations should be clear in mandating evaluators and the beneficiaries should be involved with focal partners in the evaluation procedures"* (PS -10).

Table (7-8) The evaluation procedures during the Egyptian initiatives compared with the layers of the evaluation framework

		Performance of Egyptian initiatives			Comments
		FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG	
The layer of evaluation framework	Pre-process	◉	○	?	Quick review of the previous attempts during FEDP. But RSSTI stated a brief overview about previous plans only
	Process	?	?	◉	There was no evaluation for the process, techniques or events during the three initiatives except ESDNVG evaluated the awareness-raising campaign
	Outcome	?	?	?	There was no evaluation for the outcomes of the initiatives
Evaluator		?	?	◉	The facilitators of the events who were the evaluators during ESDNVG

● Fully achieved ◉ Partially achieved ○ Not achieved ? Not used

Source: The author

Synthesis

The evaluation procedures during the three Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives have been assessed against the layers of the evaluation framework (Table 7-8). It is apparent that evaluation was one of the weakest parts of the planning process in all three initiatives. Any evaluation of previous ecotourism initiatives to identify any potential lessons – and within these initiatives to reflect on either the process or outcomes – was very limited at best.

7.4 The obstacles to the stakeholder involvement and collaboration

In Egypt as in most developing countries there are some factors that create hurdles to effective stakeholder participation. Understanding and anticipating these barriers is significant in minimising their effects and promoting the stakeholder involvement during the planning process. This section investigates the main barriers that may have prevented an acceptable level of stakeholder participation in the ecotourism planning process. These barriers can be divided into three groups (as

discussed in Chapter Three): deficiencies in the government and non-government stakeholder groups, and operationalising collaboration.

7.4.1 Deficiencies in the government

The deficiencies in government include seven main barriers associated with the structure of the governmental institutions and their operation during the planning process.

- **Centralisation of the public administration system**: The tourism administration and its planning system in Egypt are described as highly centralised. In this regard, two of the interviewees remarked that the majority of the ecotourism initiatives have been initiated and managed by central government primarily through the TDA, although with some, such as RSSTI, the EEAA being granted shared responsibilities (EC-5and EC-8). This means there was a complete absence of local government (PS-3). *"The national government signed the agreements of all the three initiatives with the international donors without involving any representatives from local government or interested stakeholders to get feedback about the terms of reference before making the agreement"* (EC-21). Hence, another interviewee claimed that *"Although there was involvement of the stakeholders during the planning process of the initiatives, this was tokenistic. Central government still dominated the process, negotiations and decisions"* (EC-26). As a result, local stakeholders did not commit to the plans because they did not meet their needs, nor could central government allocate clear responsibility to other actors for the implementation of the plans (EC-3).

  As the management of the initiatives was led by central government, they created temporary institutional frameworks which were separate from the existing administrative structures. Once the initiatives had finished these temporary structures were collapsed, preventing continuity and stability with each of the initiatives. It may have been better if the initiatives had been managed within the existing administration structures after they had been

properly prepared for the task. For example, TDA set up a temporary ecotourism development unit to follow-up the RSSTI planning process. However, this unit was dissolved immediately after the RSSTI was completed (EC-8).

- A lack of coordination: Although ecotourism development requires intensive coordination between concerned authorities, there was and remains considerable overlap and conflict of responsibilities, a lack of communication between authorities, and plans that are incompatible.

In addition to the evidence of vertical and horizontal fragmentations in the governmental authorities detailed in section 7.1.4 as one of the factors influencing the efficiency of the stakeholder network, the research in this section explains another aspect of the lack of coordination. A significant reason for fragmentation is the lack of communication between and amongst the authorities where each one of them cannot ask about the others' plans so that they can be reviewed or considered in any future plans (PS-14). In this regard, one of the interviewees commented that *"There are several bodies to enhance the communication and coordination between the tourism authorities like NCPSLU and SCT but they do not have legal mandate to resolve the conflicts between different agencies"* (EC-7). Additionally, a lack of transparency in decision-making between government authorities has led to a widening of the horizontal and vertical fragmentation between them (FIO-3). Hence, one interviewee claimed that *"I can't understand why there is poor coordination between governmental authorities and research centres that are considered as consultancies for these authorities in development planning issues"* (EC-16). Further to this, another interviewee pinpointed that *"In my opinion, the most important reason for the lack of coordination between government agencies is each chairman of these agencies is only concerned with fighting for his/her achievements to enhance their current position without any care for public interests"* (EC-13).

- Lack of information: Information is seen as one of the most important resources both for the development process and a means to build consensus between the stakeholders. Information about tourism development in Egypt is limited because the majority of the developments are located in peripheral areas and there are no detailed databases for many resources (EC-8). In the same way, one of the interviewees claimed that *"There are several authorities concerned with collecting data and analysing it, such as IDSC and various information centres in each governorate. However, there is no integrated and updated database"* (FIO-3). Another interviewee reflected the views of the others: *"The Ministry of Local Development set up in each settlement a unit for collecting and analysing data then entering them in the computerised national database. Unfortunately, these units stopped quickly because of the employees poor wages"* (EC-7). Consequently, *"Ecotourism initiatives consume more than 20% of their time and budgets to build their own information databases. It would be better if there was an integrated national information system"* (EC-12). Further to this, the information was not disseminated comprehensively to allow stakeholders to participate effectively. In this respect, one of the interviewees commented that it was difficult to understand *"how stakeholders, particularly the local communities, could participate in negotiations about the ecotourism development without knowing basic information about ecotourism development"* (EC-24). Morton (2009) also highlights that it is hard to build consensus without adequate quality of information being available.

- Lack of financial resources: Financial resources are probably the most significant ingredient for ecotourism development planning and effective stakeholder participation. Due to the limited financial capabilities of the state, there is a lack of financial resources to initiate and support the development planning process in general and ecotourism in particular (EC-5). In this regard, one of the interviewees claimed that *"Although there are several income streams from tourism activities, there are limited financial resources for*

planning because much of the funding needed should be provided by the Egyptian Government. This involves long-term commitments maintaining resources beyond projects, as well as investment in the necessary infrastructure" (EC-1). Further to this, many of the interviewees emphasised that the main reason behind ineffective participation of the stakeholders during the planning process, in all the three initiatives, was the lack of financial resources, because the stakeholder participation required high cost over a long time to cover preparing, motivating and then participation activities (EC-3, EC-9 and EC-11).

As result of this, all ecotourism development-planning initiatives were reliant on international assistance. Hence, one of the interviewees commented that *"Without those international donors, these initiatives would not have been happened due to a lack of national financial resources"* (PS-12). Moreover, another interviewee emphasised that *"The plan implementation was trivial. International funds for the initiatives [were] totally oriented to plan making. No money was left to implement them"* (EC-4). In the same way, one of the interviewees commented that *"There is no national mechanism for financing the implementation and follow-up of these initiatives so the process stopped once the funding ended"* (EC-24). The government needs to seek other financial resources to enhance the implementation, such as adopting the private-public partnership (PPP) technique (EC-17). Hence, one of the interviewees remarked that *"Because there is no self-financing mechanism for the ecotourism development, the government should motivate private foundations to contribute with projects' funding, especially in implementation stages, as one aspect of the role of privative sector toward the society"* (EC-14).

- Lack of Capacity of the governmental staff was a significant challenge during the planning process. Although the TDA was the focal actor in ecotourism development, the majority of staff did not have any basic

knowledge about ecotourism development. Therefore, the TDA often hired experienced consultants to prepare these kinds of projects (EC-20). In the same way, another interviewee, who confirms the views of the others, stated that the *"TDA does not include a department concerned with ecotourism development. It set up a temporary unit to follow-up the RSSTI activities. It would be better if this department was re-established to manage and coordinate the ecotourism development across the whole state"* (EC-23). Likewise, another interviewee commented that *"The staff in the specialist ecotourism department in TDA gained a good experience during the initiatives such as RSSTI. However, as soon as the project ended they left to work in the private sector for better positions and salaries"* (PS-4). As a result of this, in any ecotourism development initiatives where there has been follow-up, the staff lack relevant experience and knowledge of both ecotourism development specifically and planning process in general. This adversely affects the final outcomes (EC-28).

Similarly, there is a lack of capacity in the staff in the EEAA, which is considered to be the main partner of the TDA in ecotourism development. In this regard, one of the interviewees claimed that *"The staff of EEAA believe that protection areas would be destroyed by any ecotourism development within them. They do not have any idea about international cases for appropriate development within the protected areas"* (EC-1). Further to this, they do not have any skills concerning how to compromise with, and accommodate, other authorities' needs with respect to the regulations. Hence, one interviewee claimed that *"The main reason for the majority of conflicts between EEAA and TDA is the staff of EEAA insisting on their opinions being right. Several cases could have been resolved through negotiation but they refused. EEAA regulations could not be challenged or compromised"* (EC-5).

Furthermore, the lack of capacity in local government is also a big problem for Egyptian development in general and particularly in ecotourism development. In this respect, one interviewee commented that *"The regional offices of EEAA*

and TDA are understaffed and their staff are overloaded with other tasks, like monitoring the environmental impact of the existing activities. How could they concentrate on the planning process?" (PS-13). Moreover, CISS and EDG (2008) highlighted the newness of ecotourism as a concept in the Egyptian context. The majority of employees have never engaged in ecotourism planning, hence *"A major obstacle that faced all three initiatives was the lack of trained staff in local government who participated in the planning process. Building a consensus between the stakeholders required a basic knowledge of both ecotourism development and negotiation procedures. Both were lacking"* (EC-20). These untrained and inexperienced staff required significant effort (time and money) to raise their awareness about ecotourism development and their skills in negotiation (EC-8). In the same way, another interviewee claimed that *"Raising awareness of the staff is not simply a number of theoretical sessions during the process but it is a continuous process of reflection to reach an acceptable level of understanding about ecotourism planning and negotiation process*" (EC-7).

- Lack of political will and elite domination: Lack of political will was one of the major barriers to the adoption of ecotourism development and stakeholder participation during its planning in Egypt. As one of the interviewees said, reflecting the view of the others, *"Most of the challenges to ecotourism development in Egypt are as a result of national unwillingness to develop this type of tourism. Due to high unemployment rates the state has promoted labour-intensive tourism [mass-tourism] to mitigate this problem"* (EC-1). Furthermore, many interviewees emphasised that politicians feared that stakeholder participation would limit their power, because participation would pave the way to social accountability for the choices and decisions. Therefore, the decision-makers sought to make participation tokenistic by dominating the discussion and the decision-making during the process (EC-3, EC-14 and EC-16). Hence, *"Plenty of the government bodies believed that there is no need for*

local people's participation because they are not aware enough about future plans and policies. I do not know how these bodies still thinking in this way after the failure of all their plans" (EC-17). Moreover, the convergence of power and capital has led to the elite dominating tourism development. They tried to exclude the local communities from the development to maintain control of the resources and maximise their profits (EC-9). Hence, one interviewee acknowledged that *"Elitist bodies are fighting ecotourism development in some places, such as the RSG, so they can set up mass-tourism, to maximise their benefits, without caring for the sustainability of the resources"* (PS-10). Consequently, according to one of the ecotourism consultants, who reflected the views of the others, *"The political support is required to promote the application of participation during ecotourism development. This will motivate the stakeholders to become involved in open participation on one hand, and encourage the authorities to accept the views of others on the other hand"* (EC-18).

- Lack of an appropriate legal framework: An appropriate legal framework is necessary to support ecotourism development and define the stakeholder roles during the process. Although there are a huge number of laws and decrees concerned with the tourism facilities and services individually, there is no overarching legislation concerned with sustainable tourism development plans or defining the roles of the stakeholders during the planning and implementation phases (PS-3). In this regard, another interviewee commented that *"The tourism facilities have been governed by various legislations such as environmental law (4/1994 and 9/2009), protected areas law (102/1983), local development law (43/1979) and the decree of TDA establishment (374/1991)"* (PS-8). Therefore, coherence and consistency between these different legislations is one of the urgent priorities for enhancing the ecotourism development (EC-7). In the same way, another interviewee claimed that *"Until now, Egypt has not had legislation that includes a national definition of*

ecotourism, its types and activities, which areas are appropriate for ecotourism development and what ecotourism development features are acceptable" (PS-10).

There is also an urgent need for a legal framework to identify clear responsibilities for the authorities that are charged with tourism development and how any conflicts will be resolved (EC-10). Indeed, Hegazy (2010) has noted that a lack of clarity of responsibilities among the relevant authorities and agencies leads to weak regulatory compliance and enforcement. One interviewee confirmed this view by asserting that *"Unfortunately, each one of the relevant authorities assumes that it has [the] upper hand in the tourism areas. It needs to implement the laws from its understanding. Therefore, the legislation should clarify how actors will collaborate during the planning and implementation process to mitigate the conflicts"* (EC-15).

With regard to the participation of the local communities during the planning process, there is no legal base to support their roles. In this respect, one interviewee claimed that *"The Law No119/2008 acknowledges the importance of stakeholder participation in identifying the issues and the challenges for the development without providing guidance as to how define these stakeholders nor the mechanism of their participation"* (EC-7). In the same way, another interviewee claimed that *"The legislation mandated the Popular Local Councils (PLCs) to participate on behalf of the communities in approving or rejecting the final plans. However, these councils do not reflect the local people because the elections were unfair. So there is a need for a legal base for ensuring the participation of a wide spectrum of local communities during the planning and approval of the outcomes"* (EC-14). Similarly, one of the interviewees remarked that *"The participation through PLCs only is inadequate, because the majority of their members are the governmental employees. So it is important to mandate a wider range of the stakeholders to negotiate and follow-up the government decision"* (EC-17).

7.4.2 Deficiencies in the local communities and other stakeholders

From the responses of the interviewees, it is clear that there are also several barriers to effective involvement of local communities and other stakeholders. These include:

Lack of trust: All the interviewees agreed that there is a lack of trust between the stakeholders and the Egyptian government. Three recurrent themes continually reinforce mistrust:

- Negative experiences and previous unmet promises. In this respect, one of the interviewees commented that *"How can we trust in the government and participate with them after several failed attempts and many promises often going unmet?"* (LC-1). The stakeholders, particularly the local communities, have negativity towards any governmental activities because they believe that the government only involves them to endorse its own decisions and complete donor requirements (NG-1). Hence, *"The response of the local communities during the planning process of RSSTI and FEDP was negative because they had previously engaged similar initiatives before them without any real attempt to address their issues"* (PS-18). For example, in the Fayoum six ecotourism development initiatives had been set up with the same objectives, all funded by different international donors. In the end, the ecotourism issues and challenges were the same as before and no real development took place. How could the local communities or other stakeholders trust in the government after this experience? (EC-8).
- A lack of transparency in government information and decision-making process. In this respect, a member of one of the local communities commented that *"There is no transparency in the information provided by or decisions made by the government. They did not speak with us once about project budgets and how they are spent. What reasons explain the inability of plan implementation? At least they should involve us in trying to address any deficiencies"* (LC-2). Another interviewee claimed that *"The*

government did not respect our views. They always decided what they needed because they believed that we were not aware of all the circumstances of the project" (NG-3). Similarly, one of the interviewees reflected the view of the others, asserting that, *"We were always shocked by the decisions that had been taken by the government. I do not know why there is no transparency with us – this is our life and these are our resources"* (LC-2).

- Changing the decisions based on political adjustments rather than long-term visions. In this regard, one interviewee remarked that *"There are no strategic decisions adopted by the government. Any change in the highest-ranking staff is always followed by total change in decisions. Therefore, we are not confident in any promises of the government"* (EC-8).

Accordingly, building bridges of trust between the stakeholders and government will be necessary for real development (EC-4)

- Lack of awareness: The lack of awareness of the stakeholders about ecotourism development and the procedures regarding participation during its planning process is one of the factors which affected the efficiency of their engagement. In this respect, one of the interviewees commented that *"Although the ecotourism development initiatives started at the beginning of the 1990s, basic knowledge about ecotourism development is not well known by the stakeholders, particularly in the local communities"* (EC-1). Due to a lack of awareness about the importance of ecotourism development and the benefits of their participation, stakeholders were unwilling to contribute to its development. In the same way, one of the interviewees commented that *"There is a passive attitude of stakeholders towards ecotourism because they believe that ecotourism is a restricted tourism form which will prevent their existing activities and limit their job opportunities"* (EC-8). Another interviewee commented that *"Apathy of the local communities toward ecotourism development is a direct result of their exclusion for a long time from affairs*

which have affected their life. Furthermore, they do not know how they can be active and effective participants" (EC-7). In the same way, another interviewee commented that *"The essential reason behind the lack of willingness to be involved during the ecotourism development is that local communities are not aware of future planning procedures and their attitude is to prefer a few immediate short-term benefits rather than more long-term and significant future returns"*. The same interviewee further argued that *"The local communities' resistance to the change must be considered one of the most significant barriers to participation in the planning process"* (EC-5).

Further to this, although local communities of ESDNVG were interested in being involved in the ecotourism development, there is evidence that their capacity regarding ecotourism – its benefits and its costs, the structure of the ecotourism development industry – was limited (EC-10). Hence, CISS and EDG (2012) emphasised that stakeholders needed continued effort to raise awareness of local communities about ecotourism development and importance of their involvement during the process in order to achieve effective participation and create new generations to support the ecotourism industry.

- Widespread illiteracy and low standard of living: The majority of ecotourism development initiatives are located in peripheral regions whose local communities are characterised by high illiteracy rates, limited access to health, and basic infrastructure services. Thus, their major concern is with daily needs and provision of basic public services. This situation represents a significant obstacle to ecotourism development and to effective participation (EC-6). In the same way, another interviewee commented that *"More than one-third of resident population in the initiatives' locations were illiterate, and the annual income of the families was lower than £2000 in 2012. Therefore, they have little interest to participate in ecotourism development"* (EC-5). Moreover, the low participation of the local communities and their inability to express their own views is inevitably the result of the poor education, low

income levels and low levels of aspiration (EC-12). In the same way, one of the interviewees commented that *"The majority of local communities were uninterested in attending the planning activities because they were preoccupied with providing for their basic needs. How could they leave their daily work without compensation money?"* (EC-3). Similarly, another interviewee remarked that *"The local communities would be interested in being involved in planning activities if they felt that the process would enhance their life situations. So the planning team should build the local people's trust in the initiative by providing actual job opportunities and enhancing their basic infrastructure"* (EC-23).

7.4.3 Deficiencies in operationalising collaboration in the planning process

The majority of the deficiencies in operationalising collaboration in the planning process have been explained in detail in previous sections (7.1 and 7.2). This section identifies one more deficiency, namely:

A lack of expertise in ecotourism development planning and stakeholder involvement was one of the most significant barriers to effective ecotourism planning in Egypt. In this regard, one of the key experts commented that *"The number of experts and consultants having the skills in ecotourism development in Egypt is limited. Almost all of them [are] involved in preparing these initiatives"* (EC-1). Another interviewee remarked that *"Although there was international expertise involved in all of these initiatives, the Egyptian experts were learning, there was overall still a lack of expertise at national, but especially at regional levels"* (EC-23). In this regard, Tosun (2006) emphasised that ecotourism planning has become a specialised activity and it has its own specific techniques, principles, and models, and the planner should be familiar with them before running the process. Hence, one of the interviewees highlighted that the *"TDA needs to set up training courses about both ecotourism development and collaborative planning for its staff to enhance*

their understanding of ecotourism planning then produce guidelines for the planners" (EC-22).

7.5 Conclusion

In the previous sections, the planning processes of three initiatives for ecotourism development have been evaluated against the conceptual framework. Drawing on the evidence from three ecotourism planning case studies, gaps in the current planning processes, as well as the barriers which have hindered the efficiency of stakeholder participation, have been identified (Table 7-9). The analysis of these initiatives revealed that ESDNVG performed slightly better than the other two, although all initiatives performed similarly poorly on the building of stakeholder networks. However, there were very few differences in practice; these included stakeholder roles during the different stages of the process, the involvement methods, stakeholder preparedness and their motivation for engagement.

Table (7-9) The gaps in the planning process and the barriers that have hindered the efficiency of stakeholder participation in Egypt

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Gaps in the procedures in operationalising the stakeholder engagement during the planning process</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">1) Stakeholder network building</td><td colspan="2">Lack of communication between the convener and stakeholders</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Omission identifying appropriate stakeholders and inadequate analysis of appropriate stakeholders during the network building</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Exclusion of external stakeholders</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Limited interaction between stakeholder representatives and their agencies</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="4">2) Stakeholder engagement with the planning process</td><td colspan="2">Inadequacies of participation levels and the stakeholder role in each planning process</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Inappropriate methods of the stakeholder involvement for each planning process</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Stakeholder motivation was often lacking</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lack of stakeholder preparation for engagement with the process</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">A lack of evaluation procedures</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="3">A lack of expertise</td></tr>
<tr><th colspan="3">Challenges that hindered effective stakeholder engagement in these processes</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Deficiencies in the local communities and other stakeholders</td><td>Deficiencies in the government</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lack of trust</td><td>Centralisation of the public administration system</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lack of awareness</td><td>Lack of coordination</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2" rowspan="5">Widespread illiteracy and low standard of living in particular</td><td rowspan="3">Lack of resources</td><td>Lack of information</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lack of financial resources</td></tr>
<tr><td>Lack of capacity</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lack of political will and domination of elite</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Lack of an appropriate legal framework</td></tr>
</table>

Source: The author

The next chapter will provide recommendations and develop a practical framework for CEP for filling in the identified gaps in the process and mitigating the barriers in order to enhance the ecotourism planning process.

Part Three: Results and findings

Chapter Eight: Developing the practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning

Chapter Eight

Developing the practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning

This chapter aims to fill the gaps in the planning processes for regional development in general, and ecotourism in particular, as well as mitigating the barriers that prevented effective stakeholder engagement. This chapter is structured around three main parts. The first focuses on summarising the findings from evaluation of Egyptian ecotourism initiatives, which provides the context for recommendations designed to fill these gaps and mitigate barriers in order to enhance the ecotourism planning process, in developing countries in general, and in Egypt in particular. Finally, a practical collaborative ecotourism planning (CEP) framework is developed.

8.1 Evaluation findings

By comparing the three initiatives with the characteristics of the planning approaches continuum (see Table 5-2 in Chapter Five), it can be emphasised that the planning processes of the three initiatives in general tried to adopt a more inclusive approach. Stakeholder involvement tended towards a consultative rather than deliberative [67]engagement approach. The majority of the stakeholders were involved in the information gathering and generic consultation rather than in decision-making (as detailed in Chapter Seven).

However, expectations of a more inclusive approach were not achieved. It is apparent that all the initiative processes had four key drawbacks (Table 8-1):

- Participation in the three initiatives was tokenistic. Interactive plan-making negotiation was not between all the stakeholder groups but limited only to the government and the planning team;
- Opportunities for input from the stakeholders were still limited as a result of deficiencies in both the government and non-government stakeholder groups (detailed in Chapter Seven) such as lack of capacity, lack of trust, etc.;

[67] Deliberative approach aims to involve all relevant stakeholders in decision making (co-produce) in a meaningful way through face-to-face negotiation to build trust and legitimacy into these decisions, and overcome the conflicts between stakeholders.

- Management of the planning processes in the three initiatives created the impression of a mixture of top-down and bottom-up approaches but central government was still extremely dominant because of the highly centralised administration system in Egypt; and
- The purposes of the stakeholder involvement, such as developing a mutual understanding by listening to stakeholder views and interests in order to build a consensus between the stakeholder groups were not achieved.

Despite these limitations, the Egyptian initiatives displayed some grounds for optimism and were certainly an improvement on previous experiences:

- A variety of stakeholder groups participated in all the initiatives' phases in a significant number of involvement activities, ranging between nine and 15 events with the exception of the analysis phase in the FEDP; and
- The stakeholders who were involved were not confined to the public sector and local communities but representatives of other groups (such as the private sector, education institutions and ecotourists) were all involved in different stages of the process.

Consequently, several of the key experts emphasised that, with regard to the development planning in general and ecotourism planning in particular, the performance of stakeholder participation during the planning process may be enhanced and move towards greater collaboration between and among the different stakeholder groups (see Figure 8-1) if gaps in the planning procedures and barriers to engagement could be mitigated (EC-3, EC-7, EC-17, EC-20 and EC-24).

Table (8-1) Performance of the Egyptian initiatives compared with the characteristics of a more inclusive approach

	Characteristics of an inclusive approach	Performance of the Egyptian initiatives			General evaluation
		FEDP	RSSTI	ESDNVG	
Level of participation	Plus Engagement/ Dialogue (interactive negotiation)	Between regional government employees and planning team	Central office of TDA & EEAA and planning team	The stakeholders proposed recommendations then the planning team and regional government produced the final outcomes	Co-production was not achieved during planning – it was still dominated by the government and planning team
Opportunity for input	Medium	Low	Low	Low	Due to the deficiencies in both government and non-government such lack of capacity & trust, etc.
Participation events/points	Participation was throughout the whole planning process	Stakeholders engaged in all the phases except the analysis (total number of involvement events was nine)	Stakeholders engaged in all the phases (total number of involvement events was 15)	Stakeholders engaged in all the phases (total number of involvement events was nine)	Stakeholder engagement was all the stages of the process in all three initiatives
Stakeholders	Public sector and representatives of local communities	Plus representatives of ecolodge owners and NGOs	Plus the mangers of all tourism services, representatives of the international tourism operators and NGOs	Plus representatives of private sectors, teachers, students and ecotourists	A variety of stakeholder groups were involved
Top-down or bottom-up app.	Top-down and bottom-up but still central (government driven)	Still central government domination as a result of the highly centralised administrative system			
Purpose	- in-depth exploration of views and interests, with emphasis on listening and achieving mutual understanding - exploration of values; and, in some situations, working towards consensus	There is no emphasis on listening to the stakeholders; there is a lack of mutual understanding and no working towards consensus as a result of the barriers detailed in Chapter Seven			

Source: The author

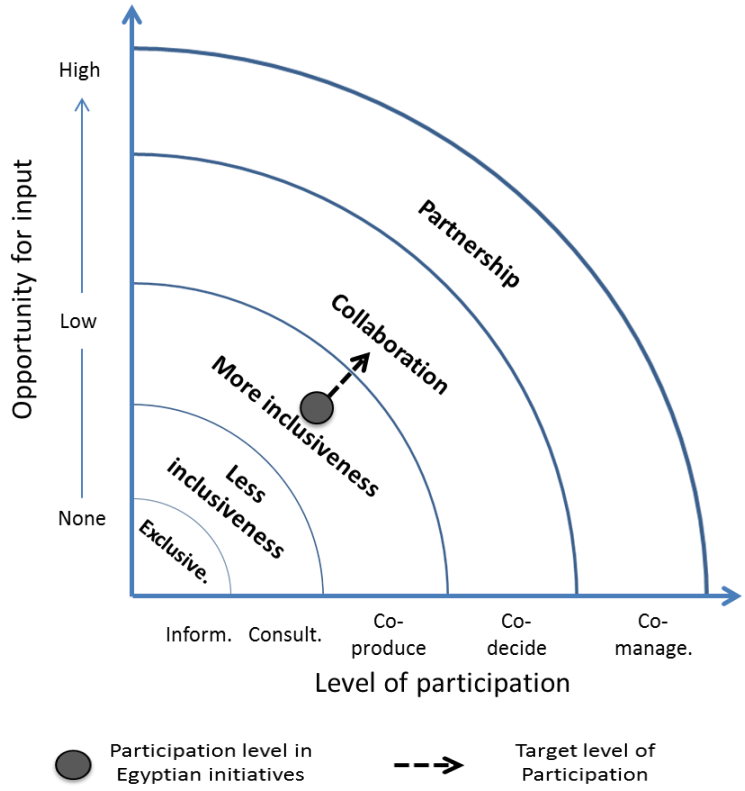


Figure (8-1) The level of the stakeholder participation during the planning process
Source: The author based on Alberta Government (2013)

It is these two themes to which the chapter now turns.

8.1.1 Deficiencies in operationalising the stakeholder engagement

Four keys deficiencies in the way the planning process works have been identified.

1) Insufficient stakeholder network building was as a result of:

a) A lack of communication between the convener and stakeholders: Communication was limited to official meetings and this was insufficient to reconcile the conflicts between the stakeholder groups because the majority of the convening team was from outside of the regions. Furthermore, the local representatives of the regional government who were part of the convening team were not qualified and did not have enough time to engage with effective communication.

b) Omission in identifying appropriate stakeholders: The internal stakeholder lists did not include all the relevant groups. Several governmental agencies such as GOPP, statutory organisations, universities and research centres were excluded from

all three initiatives. Furthermore, there were other agencies that were excluded from specific initiatives, such as the Shores Protection Authority from RSSTI. Further to this, the conveners were often not successful in engaging the most appropriate individuals to represent various stakeholder groups. Representatives from the public sector were nominated exclusively by the chief of each agency without any criteria. Therefore, often their nominated representative had little or no knowledge of ecotourism development. Furthermore, their participation through the process was not effective because they had no decision-making authority and were in effect only observers. Moreover, the local officers that were charged with following-up these initiatives had not asked to be involved during the processes and did not understand the agreements. The conveners involved non-experienced NGOs in ecotourism planning, in spite of the fact that experienced NGOs, such as NCE and HEPCA, had already contributed to activities in the proposed project area. These more qualified NGOs could have played a more pivotal role during the ecotourism development process, like training, raising the awareness of stakeholders, and giving advice regarding technical information. There was a weakness in private sector representation, and this group was often underrepresented in the process.

Furthermore, often the conveners ignored pre-existing networks that may have provided them with knowledge or experience as to how to contact the key representatives for each group. For example, in the private sector the Egyptian Tourism Federation (ETF) and Chamber of Commerce (CoC) could have been more heavily engaged, because these organisations have vast databases and excellent relations with key personnel from the tourism industry bodies, both of which could have been invaluable for an efficient ecotourism planning process.

In addition to inadequate identification of appropriate stakeholders, an analysis of stakeholders should be a crucial step in building the network to prioritise their engagement and define their role during the process. However, the conveners assumed the stakeholders had the same degree of power and interest in the development and classified them based on either the level of position (top executive, first level of decision-makers and regional/local executive employees) or sector (public, private,

local community and NGOs). This technique maintained the conflict of interests between the various stakeholder groups.

c) The exclusion of external stakeholders: Although there are several international governmental and non-governmental organisations working on synchronising the ecotourism initiatives who were interested in assisting ecotourism development in Egypt – whether from a technical or financial perspective, such as UNDP and UNESCO – these initiatives did not really include any external actors, whether global or national, except ETF (which is an example of a national NGO), during the FEDP process. However, even in this case the convener did not define those aspects of the process that the ETF could contribute to or support (Kenawy & Shaw 2014).

d) Limited interaction between stakeholder representatives and their agencies*:* Individuals who were invited to represent the interests of local people, handicraft groups or NGOs tended to only offer their personal opinions without engaging in dialogue with other group members. Moreover, the dialogue between the governmental representatives and their parent authorities was not good. The normal communication technique was simply a written summary report from the departmental representative to their boss, after each meeting had been completed, without any feedback or guidance to the representative in terms of what, if anything, they should say as part of future negotiation.

2) Inadequacies in stakeholder engagement with the planning process

Four key factors were identified as being limitations of stakeholder engagement.

a) Inadequacies of participation levels and the stakeholder role in each planning process: Stakeholder participation in Egypt can be seen as tokenism, at least judged against Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation. They were largely confined to three levels only: informing, consultation and placation (beginning of interactive negotiation). However, there were still deficiencies in stakeholder participation and their roles in each level. The techniques for informing stakeholders were not adequate because they were written in English and therefore often not accessible to the key audiences because either they were illiterate or could not understand English. Whilst local communities were the main targeted groups in consultation meetings, they were not well represented in the majority of Egyptian initiatives. These initiatives did not adopt appropriate techniques to try to combat widespread illiteracy and poverty and therefore broaden local involvement in the consultation discussions (CISS & EDG 2008, 2012). Although documentation highlighted the importance of interactive negotiation in developing the solutions, in practice many stakeholders were absent, and the governmental group dominated this stage. Furthermore, in some cases, despite making suggestions and recommendations, stakeholder views were effectively ignored, with the planning team determining the final outcomes without retuning to the stakeholders to explain or to seek their approval. This happened with ESDNVG.

The main problem was that no clear roles for the stakeholders (except for the focal actors of governmental agencies) were adequately defined early in the process to avoid wasting time and energy, and to increase their commitment to the process. In practice, the majority of stakeholders were involved at the informing level but only a minority when developing the plans and outcomes. According to Kansas (2013), in order to gain effective stakeholder participation and support during the whole process, it is important to clearly define their responsibilities based on their interests, experience and responsibilities.

b) Inappropriate stakeholder involvement methods: In all three cases, the main methods of stakeholder engagement focused on informing and training the

stakeholders rather than actively involving them so that they could have an input into decision-making. These techniques alone could not fulfil the requirements of a collaborative or participatory approach. In relation to the inappropriate and insufficient methods used in each phase of the process, the following observations can be made (Table 8-2):

i) Normally the diagnosis phase comprised two main methods. The first was individual or group interviews and surveys. This might be appropriate for single or small-scale traditional communities but was inappropriate for large-scale developments with geographically dispersed stakeholders, such as with the FEDP and the ESDNVG. A second approach was the public meetings designed to introduce the initiatives to interested stakeholders. These took place, but were largely tokenistic because the meetings were dominated by the governmental representatives, limited information was disseminated to the stakeholders and many enquiries remained unanswered.

ii) The analysis phase also encompassed two main techniques. ESDNVG provided a good example of using workshops to involve the stakeholders during the analysis phase. But in RSSTI they faced drawbacks because of the large number of attendees. This meant that not all of the participants were given sufficient time to provide their input into the discussion. Secondly, a questionnaire could have been used. This only happened in ESDNVG. However, in practice this was not an appropriate technique to gain meaningful input during the analysis phase because the respondents' answers were very brief and careless.

iii) The development phase suffered from the same drawbacks mentioned earlier with workshops involving a one-way direction of information (from the convenor to the stakeholders). Also, one public meeting (a legal requirement) was insufficient to gain support for a large-scale development with geographically dispersed stakeholders. Feedback was very limited because the majority of participants did not know anything about the initiative beforehand.

iv) Stakeholder involvement events after the plan had been completed were concerned with awareness-raising programmes and campaigns for running ecotourism

activities. It was generally felt that they would have been better if they had been concerned with building the stakeholder commitment to the plan implementation.

Table (8-2) Inappropriate and insufficient methods at each phase of the process

The involvement methods in each phase	Diagnosis		Analysis		Development		After plan making
	Face-to-face interview	Public meeting	Workshop	Questionnaire	Workshop	Public hearing	Awareness-raising programmes & campaign
Appropriateness at the phases	√	√	√	×	√	√	×
Its sufficiency	×	×	x*	×	×	×	×

√ achieved × not achieved

* It was sufficient during ESDNVG only

Source: The author

Further deficiencies related to how the meetings were actually organised and included:

- Agendas were often lacking and there was no way of enabling stakeholders to shape the agenda to reflect their concerns;
- Often information was not presented in a clearly understandable manner to the audiences;
- The timing of the meetings was inappropriate for many stakeholders as they took place during the normal working days, meaning many could not get time off to attend;
- The structure of the meetings was organised in such a way that stakeholders did not have enough time to provide their inputs; and
- There was a lack of follow-up, meaning that the stakeholders were not kept informed of meeting outcomes.

c) Stakeholder motivation was often lacking: ESDNVG was the only initiative that used two different material incentives to encourage engagement. Monetary incentives were provided to the local communities, for expenses and loss of income, and the private sector was provided with access to the database of NVG ecotourism resources. However, neither was really sufficient. The monetary incentive was provided equally to all those who attended and was not linked to their needs and

circumstances nor their inputs into the process. Furthermore, money was not really an appropriate incentive for community leaders. Providing real legitimacy for their engagement was more important. The database available to the private sector was also insufficient because of timing – it came two years after the process had commenced.

d) Lack of stakeholder preparation: In Egypt, ecotourism development characteristics were not well known, and many of the stakeholders were not really qualified to participate in the planning process, nor were they adequately prepared before their engagement in the planning process began. Most of the preparation events focused on awareness raising about running ecotourism activities. Moreover, such activities usually took place late, being located at the middle or at the end of the process. Likewise, the local communities of these initiatives were predominantly traditional and indigenous, and they needed significant input to raise their awareness about ecotourism and determine their roles during the process. However, none of the initiatives really gave enough attention to this.

3) A lack of evaluation procedures

Evaluation was one of the weakest parts in the planning process in all the cases. Generally, any evaluation of previous ecotourism initiatives to identify any potential lessons, and within these initiatives to reflect on either the process or outcomes of the initiatives, was at best very limited. The main reason for this weakness in evaluation was that there is no legal basis in Egyptian regulations to support the evaluation of the planning outcomes or processes, or to mandate a specific evaluator. So it is not given any priority.

4) A lack of expertise

The number of skilled experts in the collaborative planning approach in general and in ecotourism development in particular was limited, in spite of the fact that there have been a significant number of international initiatives concerned with ecotourism development, all attempting to use a participatory planning approach.

As the gaps in operationalising the stakeholder engagement during the planning process have been identified, the research turns now to summarise the barriers that prevented effective stakeholder engagement.

8.1.2 Barriers that hindered effective stakeholder engagement

The main barriers that prevented an acceptable level of stakeholder participation in the planning process were deficiencies in both government and non-government stakeholder groups.

1) Deficiencies related to the government

Seven key barriers were identified that were associated with the structure of the governmental institutions and their operation during the planning process, which need to be addressed.

The centralisation of the public administration system in Egypt leads to a dominance of the central government in signing agreements and managing the initiatives, while local government remains largely absent. Furthermore, proposing temporary institutional frameworks to manage the initiatives, separate from the existing administration structures, caused a failure of continuity and stability once the projects have finished.

Lack of coordination*:* There is widespread overlap and conflict of responsibilities between different governmental authorities and the plans they produce. The main reasons for this are:

- A lack of communication between and amongst the authorities;
- The coordinating bodies such as NCPSLU and SCT do not have any legal mandate to harmonise conflicts between different agencies; and
- Each chairperson of these agencies is fighting for his/her personal achievements without thinking clearly about the public interest.

Lack of information: Although there are many authorities in Egypt charged with gathering information, it remains scattered across many government agencies. Although these bodies may require similar information, they collect data separately. Therefore, each ecotourism initiative consumes a huge proportion of its time and budget updating and building its own database, even when the data has already been collected elsewhere.

A lack of financial resources: The financial resources of the state are concerned with immediate needs, such as maintaining existing tourism services and improving infrastructure. As the international funding of these initiatives was for the

planning process only, processes stopped once the project funding ended. No resources were made available by the state for implementation.

The lack of capacity amongst governmental staff was one of the main limitations on delivery. For instance, although the TDA was the focal actor in ecotourism development, the majority of its staff do not have basic knowledge because of a rapid turnover of staff leading to a lack of experience. Following the RSSTI project the TDA staff who had worked on the project left to work in the private sector, with better positions and salaries – whether inside or outside of Egypt.

The lack of political will and domination of elites: The main reasons for a lack of political will in supporting the ecotourism development or the participation of the stakeholders were:

- Misunderstanding of the ecotourism context. It does not provide significant job opportunities or economic profits – unlike conventional tourism forms;
- Politicians fear real stakeholder participation might limit their power and pave the way to social accountability for their decisions;
- Plenty of government bodies believed that there was no need for local people's participation, feeling that local people were not well enough informed to make a meaningful contribution to future plans and policies; and
- Tourism development has been dominated by elites, who have tried to exclude the local communities from the development to control the resources and maximise their profits.

A lack of an appropriate legal framework: The tourism facilities have been governed by various legislations. Coherence and consistency between these different legislations is one of the urgent priorities to identify clear responsibilities for the authorities charged with tourism development in general and ecotourism in particular. These legislations should also clarify how relevant stakeholders will collaborate during the planning and implementation phases to mitigate their conflicting interests.

2) Deficiencies in non-government stakeholders

The most important deficiencies limiting non-government stakeholder involvement during the planning process include:

Their lack of trust in the government, which was a result of:

- Negative experiences and previous unmet promises;
- Lack of transparency in government decision-making; and
- Decisions being changed according to the political situation.

A lack of understanding: Due to their lack of understanding about the importance of ecotourism development and the benefits of their participation, stakeholders were unwilling to contribute to its development. Similarly, the local communities were not aware of the future planning procedures and their attitude was to prefer a few immediate benefits rather than look forward to the prospect of a more long-term and significant future.

Widespread illiteracy and low standard of living: The local communities are characterised by high illiteracy rates, limited access to health, and basic infrastructure services. So their major concerns are with daily needs and provision of the basic public services. The low participation of the local communities and their inability to express their own views are the inevitable results of their situation.

8.1.3 Political instability

Further to the barriers mentioned above, major political instability has limited the development of a practical framework. There have been political upheavals taking place in Egypt since the 25th January Revolution in 2011, which have affected regulations, governments, decision-making processes, and development visions. These instabilities represent significant impediments to the development of ecotourism in general and public participation in particular. The main consequences of this political instability in this context are:

- A sharp decline in the number of tourist arrivals in Egypt and a halt in the tourism development in the majority of Egyptian regions because the tourism industry is vulnerable, being sensitive to the political and internal situation of the state;

- The rapid turnover in national governments has led to low efficiency in long-term development planning, including tourism. A new government is always followed by total change for the highest-ranking staff within the public bureaucracy. High-ranking officials are political appointments rather than being chosen based on their experience. As a result of these changes, previous proposals are scrapped and new plans have to be developed. Such situations do not provide the continuity or stability required for long-term tourism development (El-Barmelgy 2002);
- Mistrust between the local communities and central government has widened under these unstable political situations;
- Declining priority of public participation during development planning.

Consequently, although stakeholder participation and collaboration is understood to be important for development in Egypt, mitigating the barriers that hindered their efficiency under present political conditions seems to be very difficult. This research has not focused on the political situation for many reasons: first of all, the situation was and is changeable and unpredictable. Moran (2013) has highlighted that Egyptian political changes were quick: the fall of two presidents and a military coup in less than three years. Moreover, nobody can predict the future in the light of the continued demonstrations. Second, a quick upturn in tourist arrivals may be anticipated when greater political stability is achieved. Egypt's Central Bank confirmed that there was economic improvement in the tourism sector between June 2012 and June 2013, when the number of tourists to Egypt increased by 13% compared with the previous year (ECB 2013)(albeit from a very low base). Third, the existing situation needs collaboration and discourses between the individuals and groups to mitigate the conflicts between them. Indeed, many political experts have argued that one of the main reasons for the Egyptian situation is the lack of dialogue between the stakeholders at all levels (Freedman 2012).

The research will now turn to provide some recommendations designed to enhance future ecotourism development planning in Egypt.

8.2 Recommendations

This section provides a number of recommendations designed to fill the gaps and mitigate the barriers in operationalising a more effective stakeholder engagement in the planning process in Egypt. These recommendations are drawn from a combination of the responses from the interviewees, lessons learnt from the international examples of ecotourism planning and the literature review. There are 18 recommendations, the first nine are designed to fill identified gaps in stakeholder engagement and the second nine to mitigate the barriers that have prevented an acceptable level of stakeholder participation in the planning process. The following identifies the 18 recommendations and provides a reasoned justification.

Recommendation 1: Identify appropriate representatives from the relevant stakeholders

Due to there being a vast variety of relevant stakeholders in the ecotourism problem domain, identifying the appropriate representatives of all the relevant stakeholder groups is not always straightforward but needs deep expertise in ecotourism planning to choose the most appropriate individuals to represent the various stakeholder groups. Therefore, an experienced planner should be placed within the convening team to facilitate this task and provide technical assistance for the other members of the convening team.

There are five main groups of internal stakeholders the convener should include in the stakeholder network of the ecotourism development initiatives. Extra groups can be invited depending on the status of each region. The next part will define the recommendations for nominating each group's delegates:

Public sector: Representatives of all the relevant authorities like TDA, EEAA, MOA, ETA and GOPP, etc. at all levels alongside representatives from the Inter-ministerial Tourism Development Agency (ITDA) and the Regional Tourism Development Agency (RTDA)[68] need to be nominated. This is because bringing the different levels of the government together during the planning process could help to

[68] The research proposes two independent agencies for coordination between the competent authorities and ministries in national and regional levels. They will be explained in detail during the recommendations for mitigating the lack of coordination.

build the bridges and achieve a greater degree of consensus and shared decisions between them (Araujo & Bramwell 2002).

The convener needs to define the specification of the roles for these representatives within the invitation letters (Jarvis 2007) to assist the authorities, particularly ITDA and RTDA, in nominating the most appropriate person from their members who would be able to speak authoritatively on behalf of his/her organisation.

Furthermore, Bonilla (2003) emphasised that the best representatives for government authorities will be from the first line of decision-makers, such as vice-presidents, special advisors or consultants, because they will be more available to attend the meetings and also have authority to make decisions on behalf of their agencies. Moreover, the authorities need to nominate an alternate member to represent them in case of the absence of the primary one. This alternate member may be needed to attend at least one overlapping meeting with the primary before his/her absence.

Private sector: Nomination of representatives of the private sector would be through ETF and CoC because they have vast databases and relations with key personnel from tourism industry bodies, which will be invaluable for an efficient ecotourism planning process. These federations also will guarantee that their members remain involved throughout the planning process and committed to the outcomes.

Educational institutions and research centres: Each region includes university and research centres. The convener should invite representatives of these institutions, particularly specialists in tourism development (such as Faculty of Tourism and Hotels in Fayoum and New Valley regions). Due to the fact that they have a scientific way of thinking and they may be more aware than others of the constraints and potentials of the development, these academic staff could play a pivotal role during the planning process, such as raising the awareness amongst other stakeholders and building bridges between the local communities and the government because they are trusted by all stakeholders (governmental and non-governmental) (EC-10; Drumm & Moore 2002).

***NGOs*:** The experienced NGOs in ecotourism development need to be involved in the planning process. These qualified NGOs can play a pivotal role in mitigating the conflict between different stakeholder groups for two main reasons: i) they are

seen as a neutral player among competing interests and they offer a means of communication between players (Drumm & Moore 2002); and ii) they have a great knowledge and long experience in sustainable tourism and tourism development. Also, these NGOS can serve as trainers for raising the awareness and capacity building of stakeholders as well as providing advice regarding technical information. Moreover, these qualified NGOs may welcome being asked to engage in the planning process once they had been invited because it is compatible with their aims in sustaining natural and social resources.

Local communities: The representatives of local communities should be knowledgeable about the local resources and conditions. The convener needs to hire specialists to draw community maps to define their delegates, particularly in populated regions such as the Fayoum and the NVG, through informal meetings, sharing their religious and social events, and remaining with them for a long time. Each settlement needs to be represented during the planning process, which should not be confined to the main cities only, as these representatives will act as connectors between their communities and the planning team to improve their commitment to the outcomes.

Recommendation 2: Analysis of the representatives of relevant stakeholders

As mentioned above, the list of relevant stakeholders may be extremely large, more than could possibly be included in all planning phases due to time, financial constraints and the convening team's abilities. Therefore, the conveners need to prioritise stakeholder involvement during the process. This priority analysis for the stakeholders will also help to avoid participation gaps (as detailed in Chapter Three).

This priority analysis needs to use analytical techniques which can be carried out based on a number of the stakeholder attributes and interests such as Influence and Stake Matrix (ISM) and Power, Legitimacy and Urgency Model (PLUM) (Currie, Seaton & Wesley 2009; GOPP, Sida & UNDP 2007; Thompson 2012). In the ISM technique, the attendees write down the stakeholders in the appropriate box based on their level of influence and stake in the initiative. The final result will be four categories, as Table (8-3) shows: the key player – who has a high influence and a high stake – needs to be involved in the whole planning process and in the working group during the implementation phase, while stakeholders with low influence and a low

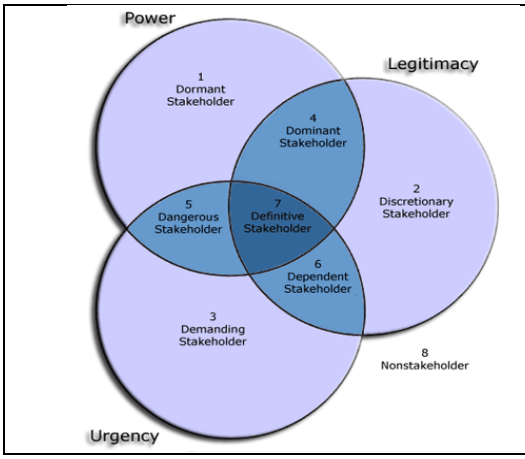
stake (crowd) have lower priority to be involved in the planning activities (Bryson 2004; Taschner & Fiedler 2009).

Table (8-3) Influence and Stake Matrix

	Low Influence/power	**High Influence/power**
Low Stake/ Importance	Least priority to be involved **4-(Crowd)**	They are highly influential but have low interest, so may be a significant risk for development and should be monitored **2-(Context Setter)**
High Stake/ Importance	Important stakeholder group, perhaps in need of empowerment: involve, build capacity and secure interests **3-(Subject)**	The most critical stakeholder group: collaborate with **4-(Key Player)**

Source: Bryson (2004); Taschner and Fiedler (2009); Thompson (2012)

In the PLUM technique, the attendees write down the appropriate number for each stakeholder according to their characteristics from power, legitimacy and urgency. The final result will also be four categories (Figure 8-2). The highest priority group – which has power, legitimacy and urgency – should be involved in the whole planning process and the working group in the implementation phase; while the lower group will be non-stakeholders who have no power, no legitimacy and no urgency (GOPP, Sida & UNDP 2007).



- The highest priority contains stakeholders who definitely have power, legitimacy and urgency
- The medium priority group contains stakeholders who have two of these skills
- The lower priority group contains stakeholders who have one of these skills
- Non-stakeholders (No power, no legitimacy and no urgency)

Figure (8-2) PLUM technique
Source: The author based on GOPP, Sida and UNDP (2007)

Recommendation 3: Enhance the interaction between stakeholder representatives and their parent groups

Regular meetings and reports which are open accessible and transparent in the decisions made as the process proceeds are important for successful dialogue between stakeholder representatives and their parent agencies, to understand the rationale of the decisions and support the final outcomes. To enhance this interaction, the convener needs to:

- Explicitly describe the roles of stakeholder representatives (SRs) during the process and ensure that these roles are fulfilled;
- Provide the SRs with the minutes and reports of each meeting so that they can be discussed with their parent organisations;
- Provide sufficient time to SRs at the beginning of each meeting to explain their agency's feedback about the last meeting outcomes;
- When there are conflicts between two or more of the stakeholders (like EEAA and TDA), the convener should ask them to establish a consultation meeting between these SRs and their parents to build consensus about these conflicts.

Recommendation 4: Promote adequate participation levels and enhance stakeholder role

Stakeholder participation during ecotourism planning in Egypt needs to be moved towards the higher rungs of Arnstein's ladder, towards more active participation and empowerment of stakeholders in decision-making and making them partly responsible for the outcomes. That is parallel with promoting the participation effectiveness and mitigating the deficiencies of current practice and involves:

i) Using a variety of appropriate techniques for informing each stakeholder group. Information should be provided in a familiar language to suit particular audiences. For instance, in informing local communities the convener might consider utilising their social and religious occasions such as Friday prayers or running children's parties to inform a wide spectrum of local people about the ecotourism initiatives. Further to this, the planning team needs to establish drop-in centres in the main municipalities, particularly those adjacent to protected areas, for exchanging information and ideas with local communities.

ii) Consultation meetings need to run in the main municipalities because one meeting is not enough with geographically dispersed stakeholders, as mentioned in Chapter Seven. Familiar language appropriate to the local communities' abilities should be used during these meetings, in order to motivate a broad number of people to become involved in the discussions. Moreover, to maximise the benefits of consultation meetings, conveners should:

- Explore specific optional visions or plans and ask stakeholders for feedback (Wilcox 2004);
- Conduct consultation at the end of each phase of the process, particularly during the preparation of plans, as well as when they are completed; and
- Provide feedback to consultation participants about their views and comments to try to build trust in the final agreements.

Furthermore, the stakeholder roles during the planning process need to be defined at an early stage to avoid confusion and inefficiency within the planning process and to give the stakeholder a sense of duty. These roles need to be based on the results of the stakeholder analysis to ensure that the right stakeholder is in the right position. Otherwise, there are no blueprints for the stakeholder responsibilities. Every development initiative needs its own tailored roles based on the skills of the stakeholders and the interaction between them, as well as the structure and coordination mechanism of the project (GIZ 2011).

Recommendation 5: Enhance appropriate methods of stakeholder involvement

The methods of involvement during the planning process need to be varied and appropriate to each stage of the process as well as to characteristics of the stakeholders to ensure a more pro-active exchange of information and views, which in turn should lead to better harmonised outcomes (Marien & Pizam 1997; Taschner & Fiedler 2009). To choose the proper engagement methods, the general criteria discussed in Chapter Three need to be taken into account in designing the involvement programme throughout the whole process. Moreover, both administrative and stakeholder-oriented techniques should be combined – to try to widen the involvement of the stakeholders and give them enough outlets to explore their views during these events.

Further to this, the informing and educating methods that had already been used during the initiative need enhancement, as follows:

Face-to-face interview and survey in large-scale developments with geographically dispersed stakeholders are needed complementary techniques like establishing drop-in centres in the main municipalities. These centres should be open access and open meetings for anybody interested in the development. These centres should aim to exchange information between the planning team and the stakeholders, conduct discussions, and receive suggestions about the implementation of decisions made at earlier stages of the initiative. They also should provide hand-outs about the initiative aims and a schedule of further meetings and events (Smith 2003).

The public meeting or seminar*:* To enhance the public meeting technique, its time framework should consist of two main parts: the first one should be for reporting to the public about the initiative's progress. The conveners should consider the different levels of participants and variety of their backgrounds about the projects in material presentation and discussion techniques. The second should be for collecting opinions and suggestions from the attendees. The conveners need to give equal room for each stakeholder group to express their views without being dominated by any governmental group. Furthermore, a public meeting should be held in all the main communities to inform and hear the views of a broader range of stakeholders, and then build external support for the initiatives. It needs to be held at the end of each phase of the planning process to receive feedback from non-participants about the phase outcome before starting the new one.

The workshop needs to include a variety of techniques (as were used during ESDNVG) to enhance the outcomes and the stakeholder performance, like holding learning sessions to include the guidelines and examples about the discussion issues, dividing the participants into small sub-groups for discussions, and using an interactive, informal technique.

In addition, some general recommendations to enhance the effectiveness of the involvement events can be suggested:

- The meetings should be well prepared in advance by choosing an effective and understandable way to present the information. In addition, the detailed agenda

of the meeting needs to be sent to the stakeholders beforehand, so that they can add their points for discussion during the meeting (Drafting Group 2002);

- The meetings should be established at the most appropriate time for the stakeholders, such as evenings or at weekends;
- The structure of the meetings should give the stakeholders enough time to provide their input. The facilitators should listen to the stakeholders more than speaking themselves;
- For following-up the meeting outcomes, the minutes and the reports of the meetings should be available for all the stakeholders to pursue the agreed outcomes at the next meetings; and
- The facilitators should guide the attendees towards consensus and win-win outcomes (Smith 2003).

Recommendation 6: Promote stakeholders' motivation to engage effectively

Motivating the stakeholder to effectively participate in development planning in Egypt, as in most developing countries, is a crucial factor in facilitating the success of a plan. Therefore, the conveners and planning team need to design an incentive programme (as discussed in Chapter Three) before the commencement of the planning which is varied and appropriate for each stakeholder group and specific individuals based on their particular characteristics and their different levels of participation. Furthermore enough financial resources to cover these incentives also need to be identified from the outset of the programme. To enhance the effectiveness of this programme, some general recommendations can be suggested;

- The incentive programme needs to address any barriers that may prevent active participation;
- The incentives need to be started at an early stage and continued throughout the process to boost the stakeholder morale to initially become and stay involved throughout all the processes; and
- The incentives need to be based on the stakeholder performance and roles during the events, not simply related to their attendance.

Recommendation 7: How to prepare stakeholder for engagement

The stakeholder preparation should start at an early stage and be continued in parallel with the planning process in order to address all knowledge gaps. These preparation events should cover three main dimensions: i) building stakeholder understanding about the requirements of ecotourism development and differentiating it from other types of tourism development; ii) breaking the ice and building the relationships between the stakeholders from various agencies; and iii) defining the roles and responsibilities of each group and individuals during the process and preparing them to perform their roles.

In addition, all information during the stakeholder preparation should be translated into an accessible and understandable format using appropriate outreach techniques for each stakeholder group. These materials also need to be distributed in order to make sure that the information is conveyed to a wider population. Moreover, the NGOs and the relevant stakeholders from the academic and research centre staff can play a pivotal role in assisting the planning team to conduct these programmes.

Recommendation 8: Enhance evaluation throughout the planning process

The evaluation procedures should not be an afterthought but should be built into the design of the process from the beginning. Moreover, evaluation needs to be a cyclical process to help the conveners to determine if some areas need to be refocused to ensure that the process is moving towards the intended outcomes. Therefore, the evaluation framework needs to include three main layers (pre-process, process and outcomes, as mentioned in Chapter Three) in order to mitigate the deficiencies of the planning process then enhance the outcomes and implementation through the lessons learnt from the problems, to avoid them in the future.

Two main principles need to be taken into account in applying this framework: i) the evaluation should be based on clear criteria covering the spectrum of the potential benefits from the collaborative process and outcomes (Innes & Booher 1999), as Table (8-4) illustrates; and ii) the regulations should mandate an evaluation committee including representatives of the beneficiaries, the focal partners and the academic stakeholders to achieve neutrality during the evaluation.

Table (8-4) The criteria of evaluation framework layers

Pre-process	Process	Outcomes
▪ Define the main reasons for the implementation inability, to consider and then solve them in the new process in order to enhance the chance of implementation ▪ Check the validity and reliability of the database to define which part needs to be updated ▪ Map out stakeholders, their role and performance, to mitigate the deficiencies during building the stakeholder network ▪ Examine the conflicts and fragmentation between and among different stakeholder groups ▪ Draw up the stakeholder involvement procedures during the process ▪ Identify the financial resources for planning and implementation phases	▪ Representatives of all relevant stakeholders are involved. ▪ The collaborative process is driven by shared views. ▪ It is self-organising, allowing stakeholders to decide on organising the procedures in terms of goals, ground rules, agenda setting, etc. ▪ Involve stakeholders, keeping them at the table, interested, and learning from discussion, and informal interactions. ▪ Create clear ground rules to address the roles and responsibilities of participants. ▪ Each participant has equal opportunity and resources to participate in consensus decision-making and negotiation. ▪ Respect diverse interests, values, and knowledge of all stakeholders. ▪ The process is flexible to allow for adjustments as circumstances change. ▪ Time limits to reach consensus and develop a plan are reasonable and realistic. ▪ Integrate high-quality information of many types and assure agreements based on its meaning. ▪ Participants feel ownership and commitment towards the plan and feel a responsibility towards implementing the final agreement. ▪ Independent facilitation ▪ Build consensus after in-depth discussions have fully examined the issues and interests, and great efforts have been made to find innovative responses to differences.	▪ Reach a high-quality agreement. ▪ Terminate stalemate. ▪ Produce innovative ideas. ▪ Increase the participants' knowledge, understanding, and skills. ▪ Build social, intellectual and political capitals. ▪ Produce high-quality information that stakeholders understand and accept. ▪ Result in government agencies and their practices that are flexible and integrated, permitting the local people to be more actively responsive to changes and conflicts.

Source: The author based on Innes and Booher (1999); Jarvis (2007); Morton (2009)

Recommendation 9: Ensure appropriate training for focal staff about ecotourism development

As ecotourism planning has become a specialised area and has its own specific techniques, principles, and models, the planner should be familiar with these before running the process. There are two main steps for ensuring that planners and staff have at least the minimum level of knowledge about ecotourism development planning:

- Establishing a group of courses for ecotourism planning in the research centres and the universities. It should be compulsory for focal partner staff or the planner to share in the ecotourism development planning. In other words, the ecotourism planners should be certificated from specific university courses to allow them to share in preparing an ecotourism development plan.
- Collaboration of the TDA, ITDA and RTDA with key experts to produce guidelines for the ecotourism planning process need to be developed and agreed.

Recommendation 10: Mitigate centralisation of the public administration system and build horizontal and vertical integration

The success of the collaborative planning approach as an alternative to the conventional centralised approach (Top-Down process) through activating the bottom-up input in the decision-making process requires a decentralised administration system and dispersion of the central governmental power to a regional and local level (Dickinson, Rutherford & Gunton 2010). To achieve this shift, the state's role has to be redefined from being the provider of the resources necessary for economic development to being an 'enabler' that provides the conditions for the private sector, NGOs and communities to function well (Loughlin & Nada 2012). Likewise, the role of the regional governmental level should be maximised to harmonise the relationship between the national and local priorities and plans. There should also be maximum horizontal and vertical integration between and amongst the authorities (Kamarudin 2013).

Consequently, in order to mitigate the high level of centralisation and to build horizontal and vertical integration in Egyptian ecotourism development[69], the research proposes an institutional framework encompassing organisations from the public and private sectors and academic consultants, as follows:

At the national level: The Inter-ministerial[70] Tourism Development Agency (ITDA[71]) will be for horizontal coordination between the competent authorities and ministries at the national level. The ITDA will not be part of the traditional system; in other words, it will not be just one more layer of administrative hierarchy. The ITDA should be flexible enough to go beyond the traditional administrative boundaries of the state (Loughlin & Nada 2012). Its chairperson will be a competent academic, appointed by the Prime Minister, and have a wide authority to harmonise between the ministries[72]. Furthermore, the ITDA board will comprise representatives of the first level of decision-makers and regional offices from the relevant authorities and ministries for tourism development as well as representatives of ETF and CoC (as a private sector). The ITDA should be legally mandated to carry out two main tasks for harmonising the agency conflicts: i) allocating responsibilities among authorities and ministries; and ii) resolving disputes or disagreement about and between tourism agencies (IASC 2013). Furthermore, the main sources of the ITDA budget will be from the central government alongside a portion of the benefits of the relevant economic authorities such as TDA, and a portion of the international grants.

[69] The research proposes a structure for mitigating the centralisation and fragmentation in ecotourism development as a pilot which will be generalised for the rest of the administration system after it has been tested.

[70] This coordination system has been used in several countries, such as South Korea, the UK, Malaysia and France, etc. (Loughlin & Nada 2012).

[71] The Supreme Council of Tourism (SCT) will not be appropriate for the coordination because it has a bad reputation: from 1982 until now it has been reorganised many times to improve its performance but this has failed. Furthermore, the ministries are too busy to share in coordination. Therefore, the research sees the best solution will be a new agency that is not part of the traditional system to achieve the coordination between the competent authorities and ministries.

[72] A roundtable was held in FURP on 29/11/2012 entitled **'Promoting of regional planning and administration structure**' under the auspices of UN-HABITAT, FURP and Cairo University. The author participated in the event - details of which can be found in Appendix 2.

At the regional level: Establishing an inter-authorities agency at the regional level will be valuable because of the long history of centralisation in Egypt and the weak capacity of local administration at the governorate level. Therefore, the Regional Tourism Development Agency (RTDA) could act as the coordination unit between the competent authorities and ministries at the regional level. The RTDA will be for each region[73]; it will also be flexible enough to transcend the traditional administrative boundaries of the region. The chairperson will be appointed from the ITDA board. Furthermore, the RTDA board will be equally divided into three parts: i) public sector including the Local Executive Council (LEC)[74], PLC, representatives of ITDA, central and regional governmental authorities; ii) private sector including regional representatives of ETF and CoC; and iii) NGOs, consultants, universities and regional research centres, and relevant Community Key Persons (CKP) (Wafik 2002). The RTDA budget should be decentralised from national resources in order to improve the regional accountability and discretion (Loughlin & Nada 2012). Besides coordination between the regional and national agencies, the main responsibilities of RTDA should be: i) identifying and securing funding and financing sources for implementation of the plans; ii) supporting the creation of strategic alliances and encouraging greater dialogue between the private and public sectors; and iii) managing all marketing and research activities (TDA et al. 2008).

At the initiative level: An Ecotourism Advisory Committee (EAC) will be set up for each initiative, and should include representatives of key stakeholders, regional and local governmental staff, and researchers from scientific organisations related to ecotourism planning (HIP 2011). The main aim of the EACs will be following up the implementation of the ecotourism development plan and providing assistance to the RTDA in coordinating the responsibilities of regional and local government during the implementation phase. Furthermore, the EACs will review the updating of the database of the activities and resources. The chairperson will be elected during the

[73] The research recommends that the seven economic regions should be unified across all ministries because they are defined based on the natural and cultural sources and Governorate borders (EC-14).
[74] The Local Executive Council (LEC) includes the governors and chiefs of city municipalities.

first meeting, which will be convened by the one of the academic consultants (TDA et al. 2008)

Recommendation 11: In order to address a lack of information and produce an integrated national tourism database

In order to build an integrated tourism database, the Information and Decision Support Centre (IDSC) should be transferred from the supervision of the Cabinet to an independent scientific centre sub-divided into sub-centres for tourism, industry and agriculture, etc. The Tourism Data Centre (TDC) should be responsible for collecting the data[75] related to tourism development on the three levels: i) Local Tourism Data Centre (LTDC) at the Governorate level will be in charge of gathering and analysing data from settlement units (that have been established by MLD after providing enhanced wages for staff); ii) Regional Tourism Data Centre (RTDC) will be responsible for gathering and analysing the data from LTDCs. The chairperson of the RTDA will monitor the RTDC and help it to harmonise the data from the different regional authorities; and ii) National Tourism Development Centre (NTDC) will be responsible for producing an integrated national tourism database.

The main staff in the first two levels should be from the local communities, for several reasons: first, to increase the local community support for the development, as happened in Fiji during the local marine development process (Dickinson, Rutherford & Gunton 2010); second it will provide local job opportunities for them; and third the local communities should be the most important local sources of data and local people can gain more ready access to this information.

Furthermore, the databases must be available to all stakeholders, to allow them to participate and engage effectively to build consensus.

[75] The database will include all forms of tourism data, namely the social, natural, ecological, socioeconomic and cultural knowledge for a good understanding of the planning area.

Recommendation 12: Internal resources for implementation

A self-financing mechanism for implementation and following-up should be initiated alongside international donors grants which are time limited and only promote the principle of development via a plan or strategy. There are several mechanisms that could be used to improve the ecotourism development, such as: i) the Private Public Partnership (PPP) technique, which strengthens the cooperation between the government and the private sector (Ibrahim 2010); ii) investment funds: money will be collected from several investors for investment in ecotourism development by a professional fund manager; and iii) Islamic bonds, which are undivided shares in the ownership of tangible assets relating to particular projects or special investment activity. These approaches may provide huge financial resources for financing national and regional projects, as recommended by a former financial minister (Thabet 2013). They should provide a good opportunity to facilitate local ownership of ecotourism development.

Recommendation 13: Build the capacity of focal actors' staff

The ITDA needs to set up programmes for building the capacity of the staff of the relevant national agencies such as TDA and EEAA. These programmes need to combine both theoretical courses and the practical parts, which encompass demonstration projects and a review of previous ecotourism initiatives and international cases. These programmes could address two main gaps: ecotourism planning knowledge and negotiation skills (EC-8). To conduct these programmes, the IDTA may need to hire well-trained academics from universities, research centres or private consulting firms who are specialists in ecotourism development and the consensus-building process (EC-14; Hegazy 2010). Furthermore, the ITDA could utilise training and capacity-building assistance which are usually provided by international organisations such as the World Bank, UNDEP and UNWTO (UNTWO & UNDP 2005).

Similarly, the same programmes will be set up by the RTDA for the local and regional government staff. But these staff require significant investment with time and money because the majority of them are unqualified to facilitate ecotourism development.

Recommendation 14: Building political will for ecotourism development

As the political unwillingness regarding ecotourism development was a result of misunderstanding the ecotourism context, it may be necessary to hold regular meetings and workshops with the main political parties and elite groups such as business people's associations to clarify the potential of ecotourism as a sustainable development approach. These meetings need to be set up by experienced national and international NGOs (World Bank 2014).

In addition, the national activists and NGOs have cooperated with international organisations in providing a lot of incentives to promote political commitment towards international conventions concerned with ecotourism development and stakeholder participation, such as the Quebec Conference in 2002 (UNWTO & UNEP 2002), and MDGs then gave sustainable tourism and stakeholders more priority in development agenda.

Recommendation 15: Design an appropriate legal framework to promote ecotourism development and enhance stakeholder engagement

The success of collaborative ecotourism planning in Egypt requires a legislative framework – besides the institutional structure – that can guide and motivate stakeholder participation as well as ensure that the government agencies accept the outcomes of this participation. This legal framework should include delegation from the central government to the regional level to take a leading role in attracting investment and developing unique locally specific competitive advantages (Dickinson, Rutherford & Gunton 2010; Loughlin & Nada 2012). Furthermore, local bodies and local communities should be given the legal rights to take part in their affairs. These legal rights should be parallel with fiscal policies and educational strategies for preparing the local communities for this involvement (Tosun & Jenkins 1996). This legal framework needs to recognise the right of the stakeholders and local communities in particular to be involved in the planning process and access information about the ecotourism development, whether database of resources or future plans, to promote their commitment.

In addition to the above, for mitigation of the conflicts in the existing regulations and laws, this new legal framework needs to: i) unify the ecotourism

definition, its types and activities, characteristics of the appropriate areas for ecotourism development, etc.; and ii) clarify ITDA and RTDA roles in coordination between the relevant agencies during the planning and implementation process.

Recommendation 16: More trust in the government needs to be developed

Several of the interviewees emphasised that the main way to build trust in the Egyptian government after many unmet promises is through actual enhancement of local communities' lives. Due to the limited abilities of the government, it needs to focus on implementing pilot projects that will provide job opportunities and solve some of the communities' problems. These pilot projects need to be documented and displayed in all media. Additionally, throughout the process, the government must act more transparently, responsibly and accountably, and be responsive to the stakeholder feedback (EC-3, EC-4 and EC-7). Likewise, for quicker building of trust, the roles of NGOs, civil society and research centres need to be maximised through these pilot projects.

Recommendation 17: Raising the awareness of local communities to engage effectively

Training and education programmes for promoting community participation should be tailored to the local needs and conditions rather than being a pre-designed training programme (Tosun & Jenkins 1996). The programmes need to include principles of ecotourism development as well as dialogue and consensus skills. To ensure success, these programmes should be at two levels:

- Formal training and education aimed to improve the capacity of the next generations to address environmental and developmental issues through the education system. Furthermore, relevant authorities like TDA and EEAA should assist the schools in designing environmental activity work plans (UNEP 1992) and a guide book, including packages of teaching tools that will help enhance environmental education in the ESAs regions. This book will be different from region to region, based on their natural, social and cultural characteristics.
- Non-formal training and education activities for adults at local, regional and national levels will be through television and radio programmes, national

newspapers, theatre, entertainment, and advertising (UNEP 1992). These activities should be reviewed by the TDA and EEAA. Furthermore, regular and continuous public events should be offered, for discussion about sustainable tourism and exploration of some national and international experiments for ecotourism development, and focus on the role of the stakeholders during the process. Likewise, campaigns should be organised focusing on the role of the family in environmental activities, women's contribution to transmission of knowledge and social values, and the development of human resources.

NGOs could be the key actors for raising awareness and capacity building in local communities as well as stimulating them to become involved in their affairs. NGOs may perform these aspects better than government agencies because they are usually less encumbered by bureaucratic rules and are thus more flexible, their staff often work on a voluntary basis and are more motivated than lower-level government staff (Hegazy 2010; Tosun 1998).

Recommendation 18: Alleviate poverty in the local community

Alleviation of local poverty could be achieved by providing job opportunities via: i) enhancing the job capabilities of local people (IFAD 2011); and ii) encouraging investors to employ at least a third of their workforce from the local communities – by doing so, they should obtain certain advantages and facilities from the government.

8.3 Practical framework of CEP

The Collaborative Ecotourism Planning (CEP) framework has been built based on lessons learnt from the international examples, and previous research and on the findings of the evaluation of the Egyptian ecotourism planning initiatives. CEP could enhance the implementation of the regional ecotourism development plans through effective participation and collaboration of relevant stakeholders during the planning process designed to resolve conflict between stakeholders via negotiation, and then advancing shared visions (Gray 1997). There are a number of considerations that should be acknowledged during developing a CEP framework. These include:

- Harmonising and maintaining close links between the stakeholders through a good network and maintaining relationships – not forgetting regular dialogue between the SRs and their agencies;
- Organising the process through agendas reflecting all the stakeholder views; and
- Engaging an experienced and neutral convener who will be significant in applying and achieving the overall objectives of the CEP framework.

The CEP framework will include five inter-connected stages[76], namely initiation, problem setting, direction setting, promotion, and implementation (Figure 8-3). There will be overlapping and iterative links between the stages because ecotourism development is considered to be highly sensitive to any changes in the situation. Moreover, each phase should be evaluated before moving to the next one. The main activities in each stage are now discussed.

1- The initiation phase

This phase has been designed to overcome several barriers that would prevent the effective participation and collaboration during the next stages, including the fragmentation between the stakeholders, a lack of knowledge about both ecotourism development in general and participation strategies and techniques in particular, and the negative attitude of the stakeholders regarding participation during the planning process. Therefore, the initiation phase will include:

[76] Two new phases were added to the three-phase model (which was discussed in Chapter Two) after modifying and moving some key steps between its phases.

- Building the stakeholder network through identifying and analysing the internal[77] and external stakeholders to define which of them should be directly and indirectly involved during the planning process. Likewise, 'breaking the ice' and starting to build the relationships between the stakeholders from various agencies should begin. However, these relationships will be continually developed throughout the whole process. The convening team will be mandated to build the stakeholder network and to persuade each stakeholder to work together during the planning process (Monjardin 2004).
- Preparing the stakeholders for participation through awareness raising of the potential of ecotourism development and stakeholder participation procedures and techniques. The main outcomes of this activity will be agreed TOR for each stakeholder group to identify their role as well as procedures for their involvement levels.
- Examining and evaluating previous projects to identify lessons to be learnt, and then focusing on the main challenges and potentials of the ecotourism development for the local region.
- An early specification of the anticipated end products (tangible and intangible outcomes) of the initiative.

2- Problem setting

This phase seeks to identify, understand, and then crystallise the issues following face-to-face dialogue between the stakeholders (Jarvis 2007). The main activities of this phase will be:

- Ensuring all stakeholders have a full and shared understanding of the ecotourism problem domain based on assessing the region's ecotourism potentials and identifying the major obstacles to development in this region.
- Building a commitment to collaborate. Although the shared common definition of the problem is often itself a sufficient ingredient to build commitment to address these issues through negotiation, stakeholders must recognise that

[77] All levels of the relevant stakeholders should be represented as detailed in section (8.2) to bridge the distance between them, and then to enhance the implementation of the plans.

collaboration will produce positive outcomes through a fair agreement and parity between the actors (Gray 1997).

- Identifying sufficient resources to ensure that the required negotiation activities and the incentives programmes can be completed.

3- Direction setting

Developing a shared direction for the future solution is considered the major aim of the direction-setting stage. This will be achieved by:

- Organising the procedures through establishing ground rules, agenda setting and organising sub-groups for negotiation activities.
- Promoting joint information searches by mutually examining and understanding relevant sources of the ecotourism development information in the region, as well as exploring other national and international examples, during discussion meetings, to encourage stakeholders to challenge the status quo, thereby developing new options (Gray 1997). Creating awareness and capacity building open to potential of the stakeholders will be one of the outcomes of this activity.
- Exploring options and reaching agreements: The stakeholders should explore all their options regarding a solution to the issue, and then, after negotiation and feedback from all the participants, the most appropriate solution will be chosen.
- Advocating a dispersion of power: The views of one stakeholder, particularly the public stakeholders, should not be allowed to dominate the process. All the decisions should be agreed through negotiation (Jamal & Stronza 2009).

4- The promotion phase

This phase will be preparation for implementation. In this stage, attempts need to be made to mitigate potential implementation challenges, such as lack of financial resources, inadequate products for the ecotourism market and reconciling conflicting responsibilities between stakeholders. The promotion group should be created, composed of primary and high-ranking actors to try and assist in mitigating these problems and motivating participation in the implementation phase. The main activities will be:

- Evaluating the initial outcomes (the shared agreements that were reached during the previous phase), then choosing a pilot project in order to test whether it can work and using this experience to modify the implementation plan. This action is important for the developing countries in general, and Egypt in particular, due to a lack of resources, political will and mistrust of the government.
- Assigning dedicated financial resources for implementation through investment or grants from national or international organisations.
- Marketing the outcomes to test the adequacy of the products for both the national and international markets.
- Raising awareness among the stakeholders, especially local communities, of the implementation needs and potentials.

5- Implementation

This phase aims to put the shared planning agreements into actions and most importantly monitor and evaluate accomplishments. The main activities will be:

- Phasing and programming the final product: Each phase will be identified through the delivery plan, including strategic objectives, funding profiles, milestones towards achievement of phase outcomes and a timetabled list of quantifiable outputs.
- Defining appropriate and proportionate monitoring mechanisms to follow up the implementation sequences and assess stakeholder compliance with the shared agreements.
- Selecting a suitable structure for institutionalising the implementation process. This might involve assigning functional roles and responsibilities, particularly for the local and regional governmental agencies, as well as forming sub-groups drawn from all the stakeholder groups to help monitor the implementation sequences.
- Harmonising the conflict between the public agencies in terms of their land jurisdiction and responsibilities, with assistance from the ITDA and RTDA.
- Building external support through consultative events to receive feedback from a wider spectrum of relevant stakeholders, particularly public people.

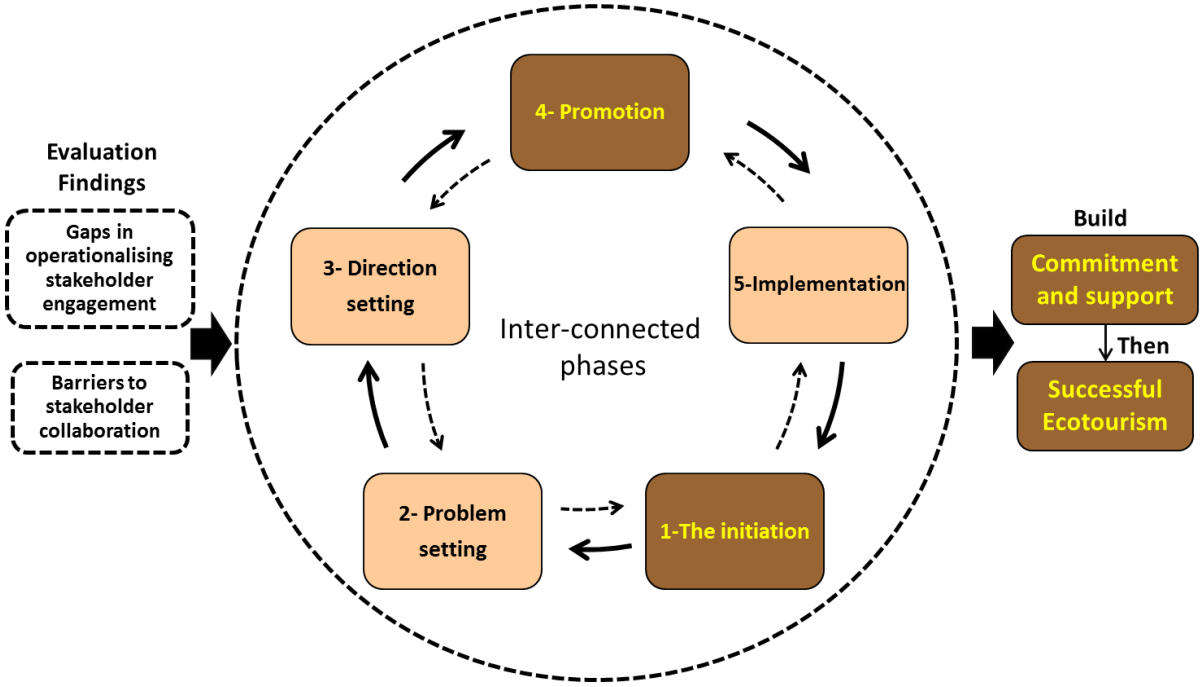


Figure (8-3) The practical framework for CEP
Source: The author

8.4 Conclusion

This chapter was designed to present a summary of the evaluation findings and provide some recommendations for enhancing stakeholder engagement during the planning process and, finally, to develop a practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning.

The first part of this chapter summarised the findings from the evaluation of Egyptian initiatives against the conceptual framework (outlined in Chapter Three). It concluded that stakeholder participation during the planning process of the initiatives in general used a more inclusive approach. This process was closer to consultative than deliberative, where the majority of the stakeholders were involved in the information gathering rather than making decisions. In addition, the performance of the stakeholder participation during the planning process could have been enhanced and moved towards real collaboration between and among different stakeholder groups if the gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement during the planning process and barriers related to government and non-government engagement had been mitigated.

The second part provided a number of recommendations to fill these gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement and addressing barriers reducing an acceptable level of stakeholder participation. These recommendations were developed based on the interviewee responses, lessons learnt from international examples of ecotourism planning and the literature review.

Finally, a practical framework for CEP has been developed based on the results of the previous section. This framework can be used to enhance operationalisation of the stakeholder engagement during the planning process for regional development in general and ecotourism in particular.

Final conclusions and reflections from this thesis will be presented in the next chapter.

Chapter Nine: Conclusions and future research

Chapter Nine

Conclusions and future research

This chapter aims at drawing out the final conclusions from this research in relation to both the conceptual and analytical framework (set out in the first part of this thesis) and evaluating ecotourism planning in practice (investigated in the second part). This chapter has three significant sections: the first examines the extent to which the research objectives, outlined in Chapter One, have been achieved. The second section reflects on the original contribution of the research and fills in some theory gaps. Finally, the limitations of this research and suggestions for further research will be discussed.

9.1 Evaluation of research objectives

In Egypt, as in most developing countries, highly technical plans are drawn up, but nobody puts them into practice. They always end up gathering dust on the shelves of national agencies or local government without improvements to local economic or environmental well-being. The main flaws in the current plan-making process are centred on central government's monopoly in decision-making; fragmentation between government agencies leading to multiple and often conflicting spatial plans for the same location; and an absence of effective negotiation mechanisms between various stakeholders. These problems can be clearly demonstrated with reference to ecotourism planning. Such plans are being developed in highly sensitive regions, both environmentally and culturally, and there is a wide spectrum of stakeholders who are affected and influenced by any ecotourism development. Ecotourism development planning is a complex issue to the extent that it is beyond the capacity of any one stakeholder acting alone to resolve. Moreover, an informal survey, conducted by the author with nine key Egyptian development planning experts found that inadequacies in the planning process were the major factor impeding the implementation of the plans. This is because the process fails to involve relevant stakeholders or deal with their conflicts.

According to many (including Bonilla (2008) and Kamarudin (2013)) one way to overcome these problems would be by promoting communication and collaboration

within and between institutions, as well as broadening stakeholder participation during the planning process. The collaborative planning approach (CPA) is hailed as one of the best methods to promote these communication channels and broaden stakeholder participation. Therefore, the main aim of this research was ***"To design a practical framework for operationalising a collaborative approach in regional planning using ecotourism development in Egypt as a case study. The outcomes would be to enhance the implementation of plans"***. In order to achieve this aim it was necessary to critically review ecotourism development requirements and the potential of collaborative planning to address them. The research investigated the critical factors that facilitate successful stakeholder engagement and collaboration during the planning process to develop an idealised conceptual framework for collaborative ecotourism planning (CEP). Thus, the main task of this research was to examine and evaluate the planning process of Egyptian ecotourism initiatives through the lens of the conceptual framework. Gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement in the current planning processes as well as the barriers which have hindered the efficiency of stakeholder participation were identified from this evaluation. The final part of this thesis attempted to provide a number of recommendations to fill these gaps and mitigate the barriers, and develop a practical framework for CEP that could be used to enhance stakeholder engagement during the planning process, for regional development in general and ecotourism in particular. More discussion of the research stages can be drawn from a review of the achievements of the research objectives.

9.1.1 Exploring ecotourism and collaborative planning

Having argued that a CPA is one of the best methods to address the current planning process problems and increase the likelihood of successful plan implementation, this research then uses ecotourism planning as a sectorial case study with particular reference to Egypt. That is why the first objective of the research was **to critically review the requirements of ecotourism development and the potential of the collaborative planning approach to address these requirements**. In order to meet this objective, a range of literature was critically reviewed (Chapter Two) in relation to ecotourism development and CPA. The discussion focused on the key

fundamentals of ecotourism as a sustainable version of nature-based tourism and cultural tourism that is consistent with environmental, social and community values. The literature also explored how ecotourism can be seen as a response to environmental degradation, which is often associated with traditional tourism development forms. Then an ecotourism development system was discussed (section 2.2.1) explaining the interrelationships between its components and how a balance between system components could be achieved. In moving towards achieving this balance, the requirements of successful ecotourism development were introduced (section 2.1.3). In order to consider these requirements, ecotourism development needs to move from a static, traditional planning approach toward dynamic collaboration between the relevant stakeholders and the planning domain. Hence, the CPA, which provides a flexible process which evolves over time (Getz & Jamal 1994b), is appropriate for coordinating regional planning of ecotourism development; addressing the interdependencies between the stakeholders and the fragmented control over ecotourism destinations; harmonising the conflicts; and reaching shared solutions (Jamal & Getz 1995a).

The literature further explored the potential of the CPA to address issues during ecotourism development by broadening stakeholder participation and building a consensus during the planning process. These measures could provide intangible benefits such as improving the stakeholder relationships and the sense of ownership between the actors, which would advance the plans and increase the willingness of all to implement them (Monjardin 2004). The research revisited the three-stage collaborative approach to make it more efficient and appropriate for application in developing counties. Furthermore, through a discussion of the critical factors for facilitating the effectiveness of stakeholder collaboration, it became evident that stakeholder engagement was the most critical issue for a successful collaborative planning approach. This is because the majority of these factors focus on stakeholder identification: widening the number of stakeholders involved in the process; building the relationships between them; ensuring that their communications encourage listening, understanding, discussion and decision-making; and consideration of how the communications and relationships can be convened (Brooks, Neary & Asuquo

2007). Moreover, these factors are concerned with defining the stakeholder roles and responsibilities in the process, examining how their confidence can be built, and implementing regular follow-up for activities regarding engagement actions.

9.1.2 Developing a conceptual framework

The research concluded at this point that success in collaborative planning processes can be measured by the degree of stakeholder engagement, their influence on the decision-making and the development of a shared vision that reflects their interests. In this context, the research aimed **to develop an idealised conceptual framework for successful collaborative ecotourism planning**. In meeting this objective, Chapter Three discussed the rationale of the conceptual framework, which is based on three main questions – who should be involved? When should they be involved? How should they be involved? – as well as on the critical factors facilitating and hindering the success of the collaborative planning process. A fourfold conceptual framework was therefore outlined (Figure 3-1). The first component was how can the stakeholder network be built during the process? To answer this question, the literature discussed conveners' characteristics and their roles in building and managing the stakeholder network. It also explored methods of stakeholder identification and analysis to try to prioritise stakeholder involvement and avoid participation gaps during the planning process. Thus, investigating the relationships and interactions among and between the stakeholders both inside and outside the network was considered critical. The second component of the conceptual framework was focused on engagement of stakeholders during different stages of the planning process and how it could be improved, including the procedures for motivating and preparing stakeholders to engage.

Furthermore, the literature explored the evaluation procedures as a third component of the conceptual framework. It was evident that evaluation should be built into the design process from the beginning. Evaluation needs to be a cyclical process to raise the legitimacy of the collaboration and help the conveners determine if some areas need to be refocused to ensure the process is moving towards its intended outcomes. Therefore, the evaluation framework needs to be taken into account when

designing any collaborative planning process, and to include three main layers: pre-process, process and outcome evaluations.

The final component of the conceptual framework was including the barriers that create hurdles to effective stakeholder participation. This component aimed to understand and anticipate these barriers in order to minimise their effects and hence promote individual and organisational involvement during the planning process.

Each component outlined above had its own set of questions that could be used to assess the success, or otherwise, of ecotourism collaborative planning initiatives within the Egyptian context.

9.1.3 Evaluating ecotourism planning in practice

The comparison between the critical factors presented by the conceptual framework and the investigated realities of the ecotourism planning process in Egypt could enrich local academic experience and literature and provide the government with guidelines on how to develop the current process towards a more collaborative approach. That is why one of the important objectives of this research was **to evaluate the planning process of Egyptian ecotourism initiatives through the lens of the conceptual framework in order to identify the gaps and the obstacles to stakeholder involvement**. This objective has been met through an empirical fieldwork investigating and evaluating three selected ecotourism planning case studies in Egypt. The conceptual framework components were used as a reference for data collection and analysis. It was evident that the planning processes of the three initiatives in general tried to adopt a more inclusive approach. Stakeholder involvement tended towards consultative rather than deliberative input. The majority of stakeholders were involved in the information gathering stages rather than in actually making decisions. The analysis of these initiatives revealed that there were critical gaps in operationalising the stakeholder engagement during the planning process.

There was insufficient stakeholder network building, which was the result of: i) a lack of communication between the convener and stakeholders; ii) an omission in identifying appropriate stakeholders; iii) inadequate analysis of appropriate

stakeholders; iv) the exclusion of external stakeholders; and v) limited interaction between stakeholder representatives and their parent groups.

Four key factors were further identified as limiting stakeholder engagement: i) inefficiency of participation level and the stakeholder role in each planning process; ii) inappropriate methods of stakeholder involvement; iii) a lack of real stakeholder motivation; and iv) poor stakeholder preparation.

A lack of evaluation was one of the weakest parts of the planning process, and was evident in all cases. This was because there is no legal basis in Egyptian regulations to support an evaluation of the planning outcomes or processes.

Other barriers which hindered stakeholder participation included deficiencies in both government and non-government stakeholders (Table 7-9).

Consequently, based on these conclusions, the research suggested that stakeholder contribution to the planning process could have been enhanced and moved towards real collaboration between and among different stakeholder groups. This required the gaps in operationalising stakeholder engagement and the barriers related to government and non-government engagement to be mitigated.

9.1.4 Adapting the theoretical framework to Egyptian circumstances

The final stage of this research methodology focused on developing a more practical framework for collaborative ecotourism planning (CEP) based on findings from the evaluation of Egyptian initiatives against the conceptual framework. In order to pave the way for developing this practical framework, the research provided a number of recommendations to fill the critical gaps and mitigate the barriers in operationalising more effective stakeholder engagement in the planning process, in developing countries in general and Egypt in particular. These recommendations are drawing from a combination of evaluation of the case studies, lessons learnt from the international examples of ecotourism planning and the literature review.

The framework was designed to resolve conflict between and amongst stakeholders via face-to-face negotiation and then advance a shared vision. In order to increase the likelihood of success, three important considerations needed to be recognised. These were: i) building a good network to maintain relationships between

relevant stakeholder was critical; ii) the process and actions should reflect all stakeholder views; and iii) this process should be convened by an experienced and neutral team.

The research suggested two new phases, initiation and promotion, to the three-phase approach (section 2.2.3) after modifying and moving some key steps between the phases (Table 2-4). Thus, the new CEP contained five inter-connected stages (Figure 8-3). The research designed these stages to be overlapping and iterative because ecotourism development is considered to be highly sensitive to any change in circumstances.

9.2 Research contributions

This research, as mentioned earlier, was an attempt to address the main factors impeding the implementation of plans within a developing country with particular reference to Egypt. Better processes of deliberation and plan making will lead to better outcomes and hopefully greater support for, and commitment to, implementation efforts. Thus, it was evident that the collaborative approach was an appropriate one, building consensus between the stakeholders, and developing solutions that are acceptable to all. The research endeavoured to use the collaborative approach with special references to ecotourism planning initiatives in Egypt. In a sense, this research makes some contributions to the development planning, ecotourism studies and collaborative planning approach, as given below.

This study provided improved theoretical understanding of ecotourism development requirements and the potential of collaborative planning to address these requirements. It also expanded the existing body of knowledge on ecotourism development systems at the regional level and showed how stakeholder participation and collaboration during the planning could achieve positive interrelationships between the components of the system. Likewise, collaborative planning approaches were revisited to create an appropriate form for developing countries in general and Egypt in particular. Therefore, an idealised conceptual framework for CEP was developed in order to promote operationalisation of stakeholder engagement in the planning process of regional development in general and ecotourism in particular.

Further to this, through case study investigations, a clear understanding was developed about the main barriers that hindered an acceptable level of stakeholder participation in the planning process. This investigation therefore provides some helpful findings for other developing countries that may have some similarities with the Egyptian cases. The most important contribution was that of developing a practical framework for CEP which may be added to the resources of this area of research. This framework attempted to provide a methodology and guidelines on the operationalisation of stakeholder engagement during the planning process, designed to increase the likely success of plan implementation. Moreover, an evaluation framework was introduced to be included in the design of the planning process from the beginning in order to raise the legitimacy of the participatory process and the appropriateness of the developed solution.

9.3 Limitations of the research

In addition to the challenges that faced the researcher during the data collection process in terms of difficulties in scheduling and conducting the interviews, which were presented in section 5.4.4, there were other difficulties. More discussion of three limitations to this research are given below:

The period of time to complete the fieldwork involved in this study was limited to only three months. This was the maximum period that could be spent outside the UK because of the sponsors' requirements. The fieldwork was conducted in three remote areas: the Fayoum, Red Sea and New Valley Governorates. Great distances have to be travelled within these Governorates to reach various settlements, and the Egyptian transport system is very limited. Therefore, only the main settlement (such as Tunis village in the Fayoum) was visited in each case study area. The researcher attempted to overcome this limitation of poor access to many local communities through the use of the secondary data.

Another limitation was difficulties in gathering the required information for each case study area, due to the conflict of information between governmental authorities. Not all information was also available to collect specifically which related to future plans and visions. Thus, the researcher tried to handle this issue through a

key informant in each governmental body, who was identified during multiple visits to these bodies.

Finally, due to the existing political instability the initial research methodology had to be adapted. During a preliminary stage of the research design, a third stage of interviews was anticipated to evaluate and modify the practical CEP framework based around structured interviews with key experts and academics experienced in ecotourism planning and collaboration. However this stage was cancelled due to ongoing political unrest. Therefore, the framework was supported by documentary resources and learnt lessons from international examples. But, once stability returns to Egypt, further research may help to test the validity of the findings.

9.4 The future research

The final section of this thesis suggests a scope for future research based on the findings and results of this research. This scope can be presented around two main themes. The first is operationalisation of stakeholder engagement in the planning process and includes:

- From the extensive literature review, it is evident that a collaborative approach is still not practised in developing countries in particular. Further research is needed to translate the principles of this approach into practical measures and methods that ensure communication and integration across all relevant sectors and levels to address the government deficiencies.
- It is impossible to enhance the stakeholder engagement in the planning process without building public awareness amongst stakeholders as to why, when and how they can be active participants. Further research needs to complement this research to develop national and regional programmes to promote the stakeholder awareness, in particular amongst local communities. Moreover, special attention should be given to the role of NGOs and local community-based organisations in these programmes. Such approaches could be tested in selected regions to investigate, in detail, the main challenges for their application.

- As mentioned above, the practical CEP framework which was developed as a result of this research needs to be empirically tested in the context of other kinds of development planning, with the focus on analysing the promotion and initiation phases to enhance their validity for application in the Egyptian context.

The second theme is ecotourism development and includes:

- Integration between ecotourism, as a new product, and conventional mass tourism, is seen as the most effective way to mitigate the challenges in Egyptian tourism development (section 4.2.1). Thus, further research needs to investigate how both tourism forms could co-exist without negative impacts on either. Such a study will be helpful in diversifying tourism offerings in Egypt, thereby enhancing the country's share of the global tourism market.
- Supporting and incentivising ecotourism development is another significant issue that needs to be investigated. Further discussion about effective measures to motivate the government and investors to develop ecotourism products as a new approach towards sustainability needs to be conducted.
- The domestic and Arabian markets for ecotourism also require further investigation. The majority of marketing experts emphasise that both markets could provide important potential not only in increasing the tourism contribution to GDP and offering new employment opportunities but also mitigating fluctuations in the number of tourists as a result of the unstable situation in the Middle East.
- Finally, since the research was undertaken, Egypt was and continues to be afflicted by political instability, and what impact this has had on tourism development more generally and ecotourism development in particular, including stakeholder willingness to become involved in future-orientated planning strategies, is uncertain. Once stability returns, further research will help complement this research to enhance the implementation of plans in Egypt in particular and developing countries more generally.

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Appendices

Appendix (1) The lists of interviewees

The list of interviewees for the informal survey

Code	Experience	Profession and Job Nature
1	Environmental and ecotourism consultant	Ecotourism planning consultant and general manager of Environmental Design Group (EDG) consulting company
2	Consultant in sustainable tourism and ecotourism development	- Planning Consultant of GOPP and TDA; - Prof. in Urban Design Department, FURP, Cairo University.
3	Project Manager for a significant number of projects using participatory and collaborative approaches	Governance and Civic Program director of CARE International in Egypt
4	Environmental and tourism planning consultant	Consultant in the TDA
5	- Sustainable tourism and ecotourism planning consultant; and - Senior Planner in the **RSSTI**	- Consultant of GOPP and TDA; and - Deputy Chairman of Urban Research Consulting Centre in Cairo University.
6	Local community development consultant	- Consultant in Ministry of Local Development (MLD)
7	Consultant in environmental planning using participation and collaborative approaches	Planning Consultant of GOPP
8	- Regional development consultant - Highly experienced in participatory planning approach	- Regional Planning Consultant of GOPP
9	Urban planner	The GOPP BRO in Fayoum

The list of interviewees for the first stage

Code	Experience	Profession and Job Nature
EC-1	Environmental and Ecotourism Consultant:- - Task Manager and Senior land use advisor in **the RSSTI**; - Project manager and senior ecotourism planner for **ecotourism development strategy for Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley) world heritage centre;** - Project manager, trainer and senior Ecotourism Planner in the **FEDP**; and - Project manager, trainer and senior ecotourism planner in the **ESDNVG**	Ecotourism planning consultant and general manager of Environmental Design Group (EDG) consulting company
EC-2	- Ecotourism consultant - Senior planner in the **RSSTI** project	- Chairman of General Organization for Physical Planning (GOPP) - Ex-consultant in the TDA
EC-3	Project manager for a significant number of projects using participatory and collaborative approaches	Governance and civic program director of CARE International in Egypt
EC-4	- Environmental and tourism planning consultant; and - Highly experienced in Egyptian society patterns	Consultant in the TDA and Prof. in Urban Design Department, FURP, Cairo University
EC-5	- Sustainable tourism and ecotourism planning consultant; and - Senior planner in the **RSSTI**	- Consultant of GOPP and TDA; and - Deputy Chairman of Urban Research Consulting Centre in Cairo University.
EC-6	Urban planner in ecotourism development for **Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley) world heritage centre** and **New Valley** Protected areas	- Technical consultant for GOPP Head Office-Ministry of Housing
EC-7	- Consultant in socio-economic development; - Highly experienced in public participation	- Consultant of USAID and CIDA[78]; and - Prof. in Environmental Planning Department in FURP, Cairo University
EC-8	Consultant in sustainable tourism and ecotourism development particularly in North-West Coast of Mediterranean Sea	- Planning consultant of GOPP and TDA; - Prof. in Urban Design Department, FURP, Cairo University.
EC-9	Highly experienced in participatory planning approach	- Urban planning, consultant of GOPP and TDA
EC-10	- Regional development consultant - Highly experienced in participatory planning approach	- Regional planning consultant of GOPP
EC-11	- Regional development consultant - Highly experienced in participatory	- Regional planning consultant of GOPP - Head of Regional Planning Department,

[78] Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

	planning approach	FURP, Cairo University
EC-12	Local community development expert particularly in historical areas	Urban planner in Aga Khan Foundation
EC-13	Local community development consultant	- Planning consultant of Ministry of Housing , Utilities and Urban Communities (MHUC); and - Prof. in Urban Planning Department, Canal Suez University
EC-14	Consultant in local development and decentralisation in developing countries	- Consultant in Minister of Local Development (MLD) - Chairman of Public Administration Research & Consultation Centre (PARC), Cairo University
EC-15	Local community development consultant	- Consultant in Minister of Local Development (MLD)
EC-16	Consultant in environmental planning using participatory and collaborative approaches	- Executive manager of Planning and Architecture Office (PAO)
EC-17	- **Technical manager** for the first phase of Egyptian villages and cities strategic plan which was implemented through a participatory planning approach - **Trainer** for consultants and local government staff on the issue of preparing a strategic plan using public participation.	- General Manager at Technical Office of GOPP between July 2006 and 2012. - Professor in Urban Planning, Department, Faculty of Engineering, French University in Cairo
EC-18	Consultant in tourism and sustainable development planning	- Planning consultant of TDA and EEAA - Head of Architecture Department, Engineering Faculty, Cairo University
EC-19	Key expert in spatial planning approaches	Urban planner

Classification of the interviewees

Experiences	Number of interviewees
Ecotourism and sustainable tourism	7
Public participation and collaborative planning	7
Local government and community	4
Planning approaches	1
Total	19

The initial interviewee list contained 19 key experts and consultants: seven who were expert in ecotourism and sustainable tourism; seven in public participation and participatory approach; four in local government and community; and one expert in planning approach evolution in Egypt.

The list of interviewees for the second stage

Code	Professional background	Case study name		
		FEDP	**RSSTI**	**ESDNVG**
Experts and Consultants (EC)				
EC-20	- Task manager and senior land use advisor in the RSSTI; - Project manager, trainer and senior ecotourism planner in the FEDP & ESDNVG.			
EC-21	Senior planner in the RSSTI project			
EC-22	Task coordinator in the RSSTI			
EC-23	Task manager in the RSSTI			
EC-24	Ecotourism consultant and senior planner in the RSSTI			
EC-25	Local handicrafts and socio-economic analyst in the FEDP			
EC-26	Regional ecotourism consultant in the ESDNVG			
EC-27	Ecotourism marketing expert in the DEFP and ESDNVG			
EC-28	Marine and coastal resource analyst and management consultant			
EC-29	Regional ecotourism consultant in the ESDNVG			
Public Sector (PS)				
	Professional background			
PS-1	Planning Department in the TDA			
PS-2	Manager of Reviewing and Project Preparation Department in the TDA			
PS-3	Director of the Central Department of EIA in the TDA			
PS-4	Reviewing and Project Preparation Department in the TDA			
PS-5	Director of the TDA BRO in Fayoum			
PS-6	Director of TDA BROs in the Red Sea			
PS-7	Director of TDA BRO in New Valley			
PS-8	General director of Tourism Projects EIA Department in the EEAA			
PS-9	Director of Tourism Projects EIA Department in the EEAA			
PS-10	Director Nature Protection Department in the EEAA			
PS-11	Director Nature Protection Department in the EEAA BRO in Fayoum			
PS-12	Nature Protection Department in the EEAA BRO in New valley			
PS-13	Tourism Projects EIA Department in the EEAA BRO in Red Sea			
PS-14	Urban planner in the GOPP BRO in Fayoum			
PS-15	Urban planner in the GOPP BRO in Fayoum			
PS-16	General director of Department of the MOT BRO in Fayoum			
PS-17	General director of Department of the MOT BRO in New Valley			
PS-18	Director of Planning Department in the Fayoum Governorate			

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Code	Professional background	Case study name		
		FEDP	**RSSTI**	**ESDNVG**
PS-19	Director of Planning Department in the New Valley Governorate			
PS-20	General manager of the Fayoum Tourism Authority (FTA)			
PS-21	General manager of the New Valley Tourism Authority			
PS-22	Vice-manager of Fayoum Tourism Authority			
PS-23	Director of Urban Development Planning Department in central office of GOPP			
Private sector (PrS)				
PrS-1	Ecolodge owner in the Fayoum			
PrS-2	Tour operator in the Fayoum			
PrS-3	Member of the Egyptian Tourism Federation board (external stakeholder)			
PrS-4	Tourism investor in the Fayoum			
Local Communities (LC)				
LC-1	Director of Evelyn school of pottery[79] in Fayoum			
LC-2	Chief of crafts people group in the New Valley			
LC-3	Member of senate of Abbabda tribe in the Red Sea			
NGOs (NG)				
NG-1	Representative of handicrafts organisation in the Fayoum			
NG-2	Activist in Environmental Conversation Group (ECG)			
NG-3	Member assembly of Freedom and Justice Party in the NVG			
Ecotourists (ET)				
ET-1	Safari ecotourist in the Fayoum			
ET-2	Diving ecotourist in the Red Sea			
Funder and International Organisation (FIO)				
FIO-1	Ex-employee of USAID			
FIO-2	Economic researcher in the World Bank			
FIO-3	Ex-employee of the CISS			

[79] Evelyn is a Swiss lady who has established a school to teach ceramics and pottery to locals so that they can export them to Europe.

Appendix (2) The Roundtable

The author participated in a roundtable which was held in FURP, Cairo University, on 29/11/2012. It was entitled '**Promoting of regional planning and administration structure**' and aimed to discuss the conflicts and challenges in administrative structure and development process and then look at how they can be enhanced in the future.

The roundtable under the auspices of:

- Faculty of Urban & Regional Planning (FURP), Cairo University;
- Public Administration Research & Consultation centre (PARC), Cairo University; and
- United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITA).

Appendix (3) Multiple and conflicting plans for the same area

Multiple plans for development of Fayoum Governorate

The focal agencies	The year	Development plans
TDA	1991	Indicative tourism development plan for Qarun Lake and Wadi El Rayan
	2000	Ecotourism for sustainable development in the Fayoum Oasis
	2004	Preparatory phase for ecotourism in Fayoum
	2004	Tourism Development Plan for the northern coast of Qarun Lake
TDA and Cairo Uni.	2006	Ecotourism development plan for Wadi Al-Hitan (Whale Valley) world heritage centre
TDA	2008	Fayoum ecotourism development plan 2005–2015
GOPP	2005	Spatial development strategy for Fayoum Governorate
	2008	Spatial development strategy for Fayoum Governorate
GOPP and UNDP	2010	Spatial strategic plan for Fayoum Governorate
EEAA	2001	Conservation management plan for Wadi El-Rayan protectorate
	2008	Environmental Action Plan for Fayoum Governorate
	N/V	Conservation management plan for Qarun Lake protectorate
Fayoum Governorate & Cairo Uni.	1998	Horizon of the Development in the Fayoum Governorate
MPIC	1995	National project for northern Governorates of Upper Egypt development (Fayoum is one of them)

Source: The author based on the documentations of these plans

The most important initiatives for the Red Sea development

The focal agencies	The year	Development plans
TDA	1993	Regional and sector development plans for the Red Sea coast
	1997	Integrated tourism development centres for five zones south of Marsa Alam city
	2003	Ecotourism development for El-Qusier – Marsa Alam Sector
TDA, EEAA and RSG	1998	Management coastal plan and the Environmentally Sustainable Tourism Project (EST)
	1999	Red Sea Sustainable Tourism Initiative (RSSTI)
	2003	Economic Valuation of the Egyptian Red Sea Coral Reef
	2005	Livelihood and Income From Environment (LIFE) initiative
GOPP	2005	Spatial development strategy for the Red Sea Governorate
	2008	Spatial development strategy for the Red Sea Governorate
EEAA	2008	Environmental Action Plan for the Red Sea Governorate

Source: The author based on the documentations of these plans

Appendix (4) Egyptian economic regions

Egypt is divided into seven economic regions as follows:

1) **Cairo Region**: It consists of Cairo, Qualibia and Giza Governorates. Its capital is Cairo.

2) **Alexandria Region**: It consists of Alexandria, Matrouh and Behira Governorates. Its capital is Alexandria.

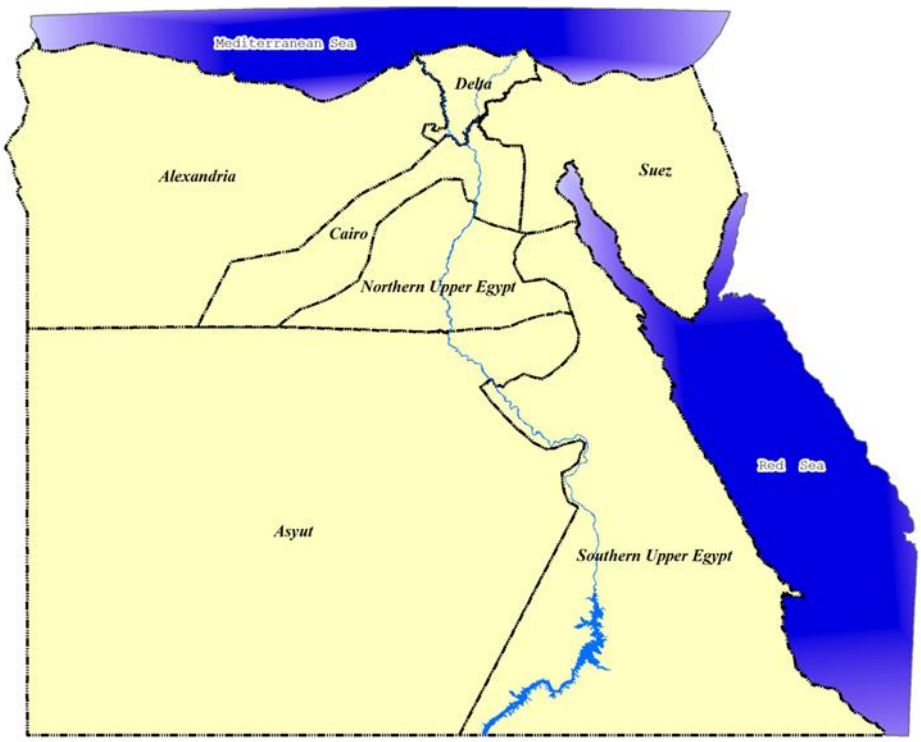
3) **Delta Region**: It consists of the governorates of Monufeyya, Gharbeyya, Kafr Al-Sheikh, Damietta and Daqahleyya. Its capital is Tanta.

4) **Suez Canal Region**: It comprises the Governorates of Sinai, Port Said, Ismailia, Suez and Sharqeyya, and including, the Gulf of Suez. Its capital is Ismailia.

5) **Northern Upper Egypt Region**: It comprises the Governorates of Bani Suef, Menia and Fayoum. Its capital is Menia.

6) **Asyut Region**: It comprises the Governorates of Asyut and New Valley. Its capital is Asyut.

7) **Southern Upper Egypt Region**: It comprises the Governorates Suhag, Qena, Aswan and the Red Sea Governorate. Its capital is Aswan.



The Egyptian economic regions
Source: The author based on GOPP database (2010)

Appendix (5) Publications

Kenawy, E. & Shaw, D. (2014) Developing a more effective regional planning framework in Egypt: the case of ecotourism, in C. Brebbia, S. A Favro & F.D. Pineda (eds), *Sustainable Tourism VI*, WIT press, Southampton, UK.

Abstract

In Egypt, rational regional development plans are drawn up, but nobody puts them into practice. They end up gathering dust on the shelves. The main flaws in the current plan-making process are centred on the government's centrality and monopoly in decision-making; fragmentation between government agencies leading to multiple and often conflicting spatial plans for the same location; and an absence of negotiations between various stakeholders. These problems can be clearly demonstrated with reference to ecotourism planning. Such plans are being developed in highly sensitive regions, both environmentally and culturally, and there is a wide spectrum of stakeholders who are affected and influenced by any ecotourism development. Ecotourism development planning is a complex issue to the extent that it is beyond the capacity of any one stakeholder acting alone to resolve. The collaborative approach is an appropriate one, building consensus between the stakeholders, and developing solutions that are acceptable to all. By focusing on two case studies, the Fayoum and New Valley regions, and critiquing existing experiences of ecotourism regional planning, a collaborative ecotourism planning framework will be developed.

Keywords: planning process, collaborative approach, ecotourism, stakeholders, Egypt.

Emad Kenawy and Dave Shaw, Developing a more collaborative planning framework for a more equitable ecotourism development patterns in Egypt – Regional Studies Association Early Career Conference, Sheffield, UK, 30-31 October 2014

Abstract

The greatest benefits from tourism development can only be achieved if there is effective collaboration between all the relevant stakeholders: government agencies, private sector, activists and local communities. This will ensure that there is a more balanced relationship between the environment and development.

However in Egypt, this relationship remains very unbalanced as a result of tensions between, and among, the stakeholder groups. As with other forms of planning, Central Government takes full control of tourism development and they burden themselves with building and maintaining the infrastructure. They have branches offices at a local level and there is often conflict between the national and local branches of central government about what development should occur. This is a common problem across the world as highlighted by Lee, Riley and Hampton (2008). Furthermore the separate local governmental organisations have been given responsibilities to monitor project development but without any decision-making power or budgetary responsibility (Loughlin & Nada 2012). Moreover the Government does not consider other stakeholders as their partners in development but sees them as adversaries in a battle of conflicting interests (Privat & Quesnel 2009).

Similarly, many local communities remain frustrated because they do not see any visible benefits or enhancement in their life from tourism development in general, or ecotourism in particular. This is because the major concerns of the private sector are much more commercial than environmental and look to short-term rather than long-term benefits. They seek to achieve their goals and in so doing often consume all the available nature assets and local resources. When problems arise, they are quick to cover up the harm and rid themselves of any responsibility (Ibrahim 2009). In the end, they complain about poor infrastructure and the lack of services, which the Government blames on lack of private funding.

The consequences of this lack of co-ordination and integration are many and include:- i) the degradation of tourism destinations, which has led to Egyptian tourism

products being perceived as low-price and low-quality (Chemonics 2006). This is particularly problematic in the Red Sea where many coral reefs, have been lost; ii) owing to the marginalisation of local people from any fair benefits from the tourism development, they often abuse the natural assets through informal and unregulated activities selling souvenirs to visitors as, thereby further degrading the environment; and iii) a lack of commitment to the implementation of plans not reflecting stakeholder interest means that the plans end up gathering dust on the shelves or are implemented in a fragmented way with different plans being used differentially to satisfy particular users interests.

These arguments are circular and very unlikely to be solved without more effective collaboration between relevant stakeholders which may avoid the costs of resolving long running conflicts and improve sustainable ecotourism development. The most appropriate starting point for this is focusing on the initial planning process by ensuring that development plans properly reflect stakeholder interests and dealing with their conflict through face-to-face dialogue. This paper will focus on the conflicts in ecotourism development through the exploration of a detailed case study of ecotourism planning and development in Egypt. The failure of recent practice provides a context to suggest how more inclusive and equitable forms of ecotourism development could be developed in the future. Explorations of this sort have implications for other developing country contexts where ecotourism development is being promoted.

Keywords: *Conflicts, resistance, interest, planning process, collaborative approach, ecotourism, stakeholders and Egypt*